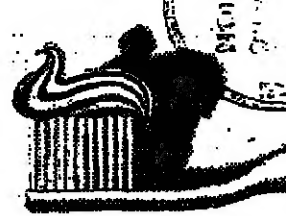


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FINANCIAL TIMES

Europe's Business Newspaper

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Merck president quits after seven months in the job

Richard Markham, president of Merck, the world's largest prescription drugs group, has resigned unexpectedly after just seven months in the post. The 42-year-old Markham, who was also Merck's chief operating officer, was widely viewed as heir apparent to the company's chairman, Roy Vagelos. The move surprised analysts who suggested there was nothing in the company's recent performance to account for it. Page 15

Move to break trade logjam: Germany, in advance of today's resumption of the long dormant Uruguay Round of trade liberalisation talks in Geneva, has suggested channelling European Community funds to French farmers to win France's support for an agreement cutting farm subsidies. Page 14; Tokyo claims advantage in numerical targets battle, Page 4; Editorial Comment, Page 13; Samuel Brittan, Page 13

Debt talks may restart: Olympia & York USA is close to resuming talks with creditors on restructuring its US\$5.3bn debt after settling disputes relating to its board of directors and other issues of corporate governance. Page 15

Segni looks to fight for middle ground



Mario Segni (left), leader of Italy's referendum movement, is expected to join forces with the cross-party Democratic Alliance movement this week in a union that could form the basis for a broad-based party capable of challenging the majority Christian Democrats for the political middle ground. Segni broke away from the Christian Democrats this year. Page 14; Further arrest in water inquiry, Page 2

Denktaş set to meet Nadrin: Fugitive businessman Asil Nadrin was due to meet north Cypriot president Rauf Denktaş last night. The meeting comes amid further signs that the island government is co-operating to block the efforts of the administrators to Polly Peck International, Mr Nadrin's former company. Page 14

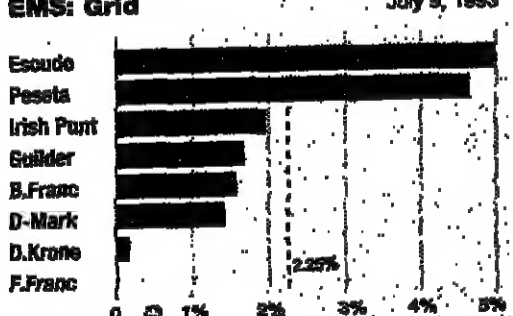
Disaster area grows: The US government declared 44 more Missouri counties disaster areas, adding to the six-state area in the Mississippi basin that has been devastated by floods. Page 3

Aluminium Company of America: The world's biggest aluminium producer, has reported a 21 per cent drop in second-quarter net income before special charges. Page 17

Thatcher backs referendum: Splits in the ruling Tory party over Europe resurfaced as Baroness Thatcher, the former prime minister, said she would back attempts to win a referendum on the Maastricht treaty. Page 5

European Monetary System: The main focus in currency markets this week will be on the French franc which came under strong selling pressure in the European exchange rate mechanism last week. The franc is now at the bottom of the ERM grid. More importantly, its divergence indicator, which is a technical way of measuring a currency's value in the system, was registering minus 71 percentage points on Friday night. When a currency falls to minus 75 percentage points it is generally assumed that ERM central banks will intervene in the foreign exchange markets to support the ailing currency. Currencies, Page 25

EMS: Grid July 9, 1993



The chart shows the member currencies of the exchange rate mechanism measured against the weakest currency in the EMS's narrow 2.25 per cent fluctuation band. In practice, currencies in the narrow band cannot rise more than 2.25 per cent from the weakest currency in that part of the system. The Spanish peseta and Portuguese escudo operate with 6 per cent fluctuation bands.

Economic union agreed: Belarus, Russia and Ukraine, the three former Soviet republics which created the Commonwealth of Independent States, have pledged themselves to a close economic union. Page 3; The shadow of G7 feast, Page 2

Russian roulette deaths: A former French rugby union international, Armand Vaquerin, shot himself dead while playing Russian roulette in a bar in the southern town of Béziers.

Bronfman sales: The troubled business empire controlled by Toronto's Bronfman family is making further disposals, selling its controlling interest in Consumers Packaging, Canada's biggest glass container maker, and a 50 per cent stake in a British Columbia paper mill. Page 17

Prost wins: Frenchman Alain Prost, in a Williams-Renault, won the British Grand Prix Silverstone to increase his lead in the world drivers' championship. The other Williams-Renault driver, Damon Hill of the UK, was forced to retire 11th engine trouble when leading the race.

Visa plans small payments cross-border service

By John Gapper, Banking Correspondent, in London

VISA INTERNATIONAL, the credit card group, plans to launch a new service allowing individuals and small companies to make payments across borders in Europe next year, after testing the idea with a group of banks in 10 countries this autumn. The Visa transfer system, which will compete with the

Swift system established by European banks 16 years ago, comes amid signs of growing competition in the hitherto small market for low value cross-border payments. Visa is to use its existing data network that allows member banks to debit others for credit card payments. Banks will for the first time be able to credit accounts in other countries through the network, and so

make cross-border payments. Individuals will be guaranteed safe transfer of sums from their own account to any other European bank in the Visa network within six days. Charges and currency exchange rates will be set by the transferring bank. Visa will charge the transferring bank for each transaction, and believes it can undercut transfer prices set by Swift for its

network based in Brussels. Swift is working on plans to reduce its prices through bulk transfer of small sums. Banks have been under pressure from the European Commission over high costs and long delays faced by people attempting to transfer money across borders. The Commission believes this is hindering the development of the single market. However, banks have started to

compete more strongly for low value payments - defined by Visa as below Ecu2,500 (\$2,870). Although only 1 per cent of non-cash payments currently cross borders, this is expected to grow. Visa believes its transfer services will mainly attract individuals, but it also plans to gain business from small companies such as retailers making value added transfer tax refunds to customers in other countries.

Mr Patrick Bowden, Visa's European marketing director, said the company believed there was "an excellent opportunity" to provide a cheaper, clearer and more reliable service than individuals are currently offered by European banks. Mr Bowden said the Visa service would probably allow most payments to transfer within four

Continued on Page 14

Programme to focus on fight against poverty

World Bank plans to halt decline in quality of projects

By George Graham in Washington

THE WORLD BANK will today unveil a strategy to overhaul its management priorities and halt an alarming decline in the quality of projects in its loan portfolio.

The move is in response to a growing debate over the effectiveness of the world's multilateral development banks, the US in particular pressing for more effective use of its contributions.

Executive directors representing the Bank's shareholder countries agreed last week on a programme, entitled Next Steps, to remedy some of the problems highlighted last year by an investigative taskforce chaired by Mr Will Wapenhans, a former senior Bank official.

Representatives from the Group of Seven leading industrial nations rejected an earlier draft of the programme as inadequate. But during three days of board meetings last week the directors agreed that the document is now "as close as we are going to get". In the words of one official.

The programme, coupled with

moves to improve the transparency of the World Bank's operations by increasing disclosure and instituting an independent inspection panel, could have far-reaching effects on the way the Washington-based development institution does business.

Next Steps attempts to shift the World Bank's focus away from how much money it lends each year towards its mission to reduce poverty in the developing world, through changes in review processes and career incentives.

There will in future be more emphasis on detailed country reviews which will provide a framework for individual project loans. Promotions will also be based on how well projects perform, and not, as in the past, on the number and size of loans negotiated by staff.

"While commitment levels and the size of resource transfers cannot be ignored, the ultimate test of the Bank's operations is the performance of Bank-financed programmes, including their long-term development impact on our clients and particularly on the poorest segments of their populations," Next Steps says.

The Wapenhans report revealed problems with follow-through on loans: the proportion of projects in the World Bank's \$138bn portfolio showing big problems nearly doubled from 11 per cent in 1981 to 20 per cent a decade later. Projects were taking an average of 24 years longer to complete than Bank staff estimated at the outset.

Environmental groups have criticised Next Steps for focusing too much on financial accountability and too little on improving the actual development impact of the Bank's lending.

Discussions on disclosure during last week's board meetings also made considerable progress, and a final document will be prepared over the summer. The creation of an inspection panel has proved more controversial, but a final paper is expected to be drafted by the World Bank's annual meeting in September.

Executive directors are leaning towards an appeals commission to respond to complaints from groups, such as local citizens, environmental and human rights groups, but insist the commission must be answerable to the board.

UN inspection team flies out of Iraq



Iraq yesterday sustained its defiance of United Nations weapons inspectors by refusing to allow equipment at two missile testing sites to be sealed. A UN team led by Mark Silver, pictured in Baghdad on Saturday, spent less than 24 hours in the

country before flying back to Bahrain after failing to persuade the Iraqi authorities to allow switches at the two sites to be sealed with wax. Iraq's refusal brings closer the threat of a UN-backed strike against its military sites. Report, Page 4

Bosnia's presidency supports federation

By Laura Silber in Belgrade

BOSNIA'S collective presidency said yesterday they had agreed on the outline of a plan to create a federation out of the war-torn republic as the chief UN relief official warned that humanitarian operations in Bosnia were in jeopardy.

"They [presidency members] agreed the constitutional make-up of Bosnia-Herzegovina should be along the lines of a federal state in which all citizens of three nationalities will have equal rights," said a statement read out by Muslim vice-president Ejup Ganic after the talks in Zagreb, the Croatian capital.

The announcement, agreed after two days of debate, is likely to be rejected by Serb and Croat leaders, who have eagerly backed the republic's ethnic partition.

The Bosnian plan rejects the principle of ethnic division and says provinces would have to be worked out on economic lines.

Serb leaders at the weekend reiterated warnings that the Muslims will be left with "nothing" if they reject a three-way partition.

Muslims have opposed the division of Bosnia fearing that it will leave them in isolated reservations that are not economically viable.

Most of the 10-member presidency have opposed the Serbo-Croat plan to partition the

Continued on Page 14

Finance ministers to hear UK defence over budget deficit

By Lionel Barber in Brussels

MR Kenneth Clarke, the UK chancellor of the exchequer, will today mount a defence against charges from his European Community partners that the British government is overestimating the impact economic growth will have in curbing its £50bn (£75bn) budget deficit.

The charges are likely to surface at a meeting of EC finance ministers in Brussels today. Mr Clarke is due to present Britain's plan for bringing its economy into line with the criteria for economic and monetary union in the Maastricht treaty.

However, some ministers may pull their punches to avoid further disharmony given renewed tensions in the European exchange rate mechanism and weakness of the French franc.

The franc could face more pressure in the foreign exchanges this week as traders try to test the strength of Franco-German monetary co-operation.

Last week the Bank of France intervened to support the franc, but the operation failed to stop the French currency falling below FFr3.40 to the D-Mark, little more than 3 centimes above its ERM floor of FFr3.433. The fall came as French short-term interest rates rose sharply. On Friday they were above German money market rates for the first time in nearly two months.

If the franc's decline continues, the markets will be watching to see if the Bundesbank comes to

its rescue, allowing German monetary policy to be swayed by speculators, or whether it ignores the French currency's plight.

The European Commission makes no secret of its desire for the British pound and Italian lira to return to the ERM. Britain's floating exchange rate policy and the fact that it can expect higher economic growth in 1993 and 1994 compared to its EC partners may have coloured debate over its "convergence" plan.

During a recent meeting of the EC's secretive monetary committee, comprised of senior Treasury and central bank officials from the 12 member states, several members challenged the UK government's contention that more than two-thirds of the budget deficit was due to cyclical economic factors, and would therefore recede with economic recovery.

Others complained UK forecasts of a cut in the deficit from 6 per cent of gross domestic product this year to 3.75 per cent in 1997-98 still left the deficit above the Maastricht target of no more than 3 per cent.

The Ecofin meeting is also expected to discuss Commission plans to improve multilateral surveillance of member states' economies, possibly through common rules for drawing up convergence plans; the Group of Seven summit in Tokyo; and a possible successor to Mr Jacques Attali at the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development.

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NEWS: INTERNATIONAL

Slav states pledge economic union

By John Lloyd in Moscow

BELARUS, Russia and Ukraine, the three former Soviet republics which created the Commonwealth of Independent States, have pledged themselves to a close economic union designed to knit together once more their devastated economies.

The agreement was announced at the weekend as waves made by the Russian parliament's decision on Friday to declare Russian owner-

ship of the port of Sevastopol in the Ukrainian region of Crimea subsided, at least for the moment.

Ukrainian leaders appeared pacified yesterday by comments from Mr Boris Yeltsin on his return from the Group of Seven summit in Tokyo. The Russian president said he was "ashamed" of the decision.

The prime ministers of the three Slav states signed a "declaration on economic integration" which commits them to an economic treaty by Septem-

ber 1. This would sweep away both formal and informal barriers to trade, permit citizens of all three countries to live, work and buy property in the others and propose new institutions for developing a "common economic space".

Mr Victor Chornomyrdin, the Russian premier, hinted that the agreement would go "much further" than mere economic union - a possible reference to a clause in the declaration which says that "the governments proceed from the fact

that economic integration cannot be effective in isolation without a wider, multilateral mutual action in the political, defence and legislative areas".

However, the agreement faces a number of hurdles before it can be taken at face value, not least that it is one among many such declarations which have barely addressed the growing distance between the members of the CIS.

It is only an agreement to agree - at the mercy of a worsening of relations between the

states over the next few weeks, especially between Ukraine and Russia.

The union reunites the original signatories of the CIS agreement in December 1991 but leaves out the other seven members, especially the Central Asian states of Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan, all of which have clamoured to remain in the group.

Mr Vyacheslav Kebich, the Belarussian prime minister, denied that the non-Slav peo-

ples had been left "out in the cold" but the declaration itself specified "certain conditions" which would be attendant on their joining the new "union within a union".

Mr Alexander Shokin, the Russian deputy prime minister, said that a condition of membership was that the participating states should not be members of any other such union. However, the Central Asian states have already formed their own "common market".

Russia lurks in the shadows of G7 feast

By Loyla Boulton in Tokyo

RUSSIA emerged at last week's Tokyo summit as an intrusive but inevitable presence at Group of Seven gatherings as it struggles to switch from frightening superpower to market-based democracy.

The harsh figures of the two Borises - President Boris Yeltsin and his equally tall finance minister, Mr Boris Fyodorov - stood out in sharp contrast to their slight Japanese hosts in a vivid double act combining both the old and the new Russia.

While Mr Yeltsin used his talent for plain speaking to push for better access to western markets, the younger Mr Fyodorov reassured his western counterparts they have a solid interlocutor who knows the details of what further economic reforms involve.

Mr Yeltsin, despite joking at a final news conference that he would not be allowed back into Russia if he returned the disputed Kurile islands to Japan,

did little to mend fences with Tokyo. But he said he was prepared to discuss the sovereignty issue on a long-delayed bilateral visit in October.

Western leaders, confirming more than \$42bn in aid and loans for Russia, treated the Russian leader with a mixture of tact and caution.

Mr Yeltsin was immediately invited to next year's G7 gathering in Naples. As President Bill Clinton put it, Russia was of crucial political significance even if it did not yet qualify to become a full member.

The problems of other former Soviet republics could not help but follow Mr Yeltsin to Tokyo.

However, Mr Andrei Kozyrev, the foreign minister, was relaxed enough to talk, if only to comment on the various crises breaking out in the former Soviet Union.

He announced, for instance, that Russia wanted United Nations peace monitors to help Russian troops impose a settlement on the southern republic

of Georgia and separatist Abkhaz rebels accused of receiving support from Russian troops out of Moscow's control.

This followed an appeal for humanitarian assistance sent to the G7 summit by Mr Eduard Shevardnadze, the Georgian leader, whom many G7 politicians know personally from his days as Soviet foreign minister.

But most worrying was Ukraine, whose President Leonid Kravchuk asked the G7 on the eve of the summit not to forget economic assistance to the second most powerful republic after Russia. While Mr Yeltsin was in Tokyo, it made new threats not to give up its nuclear weapons as required by the Start 1 disarmament treaty which the US and Russia wanted to ratify.

In an attempt to make it feel less excluded, Presidents Clinton and Yeltsin said they would offer Ukraine a "trilateral deal" to encourage it to stick to earlier plans to become a nuclear-free state.



Georgian soldiers try to stop refugees getting on to a military aircraft at Sukhumi airport to flee the besieged city. Government forces broke an Abkhazian separatist blockade on Saturday

Regional jostling ties up Yeltsin assembly

John Lloyd looks at new wrangling over a constitution for Russia

RUSSIA'S constitutional convention starts a new session today that seems certain to continue and deepen the fissures in the country's power structure over the future form of the state.

A new text of the constitution has been produced in the last few days by the convention's working group, a copy of which has been obtained by the Financial Times.

Like its predecessors, it is replete with rights and freedoms for the citizens of Russia, and is careful in many instances to emphasise the break between the formal documents of the Soviet era and the present-day intention to underpin the rights of a free people within democracy.

However, the contentious parts of the draft constitution are not, for most people - except the die-hard communists who have their own document proposing a return to the dictatorship of the proletariat - the promulgation of human

and civil rights. Instead, they lie in the competing powers and responsibilities of the federal centres and the regions and republics within the Russian federation.

It is the republican and regional leadership that Mr Boris Yeltsin, the Russian president, relied on when he bypassed parliament to bring together the convention - largely made up of regional representatives. However, though this has, for the moment, shifted the struggle from a forum in which he could not hope to gain assent to one better disposed towards him, he now runs up against the jealousies and fears of leaders who are trying to safeguard their own and their peoples' interests at a time when the centre seems to bring only inflation and taxes.

The response of the republics and regions has been to

demand more and more autonomy. And, because earlier drafts favoured the republics over the regions (the republics marked ethnic territorial units reflecting the imperial nature of Russia's expansion in the 19th century), the latter are now declaring themselves republics in order to claim extra rights.

In the latest draft there has been a conscious effort to equalise the treatment of the "subjects of the federation".

For example, a small insertion in one clause gives the regions and the republics the right to make "laws", the scope of which is not defined, while another allows the possibility of accession to the federation by means of a separate treaty - thus opening the possibility of bringing in Tatarstan, the powerful republic which has always demanded special treatment.

At the same time, the drafters believe, anomalies have been ironed out of the relationship between the president and the parliament - with the president in the superior position but with parliament having greater power than previously envisaged in initiating legislation and in deciding on the composition of the government.

An earlier clause which appeared to suggest that the president was the highest court in the land has been clarified to read that he will seek to arbitrate in disputes between the centre and the regions, or between the regions themselves - but if he fails, the case will revert to the courts.

However, the differences among the regions and republics appear to be too great to enable agreement today, or in the near future. The republics resent being reduced to the

level of the regions: the regions will tolerate nothing less: all resent the special status of Tatarstan. Mr Sergei Shakhrai, the deputy premier who has been the driving force behind the Convention on Mr Yeltsin's side, said at the weekend that "we should adopt an interim constitutional agreement instead" - a view shared by Mr Sergei Filatov, Mr Yeltsin's chief of staff.

See editorial comment, P.13

The most likely timetable now appears to be that a two to three week period will elapse in which the regions and republics consider the draft and make their views felt; in the likelihood that no compromise will be possible among them, there should be

an attempt to adopt an interim constitutional agreement and an election law, allowing elections to a new parliament which - unlike the old Soviet era assembly - would have the credibility and the mandate to agree the legal basis of the state.

Mr Anatoly Sobchak, the influential mayor of St Petersburg and himself a lawyer, said in an interview with the Interfax agency that elections should be held at every level so that the system can renew itself as far as possible and so that the legislative assemblies across the Russian land mass "reflect the true balance of forces in the country".

With these forces still gathering and feeling their own strength, unsure of their own and others' limits, and inexperienced in the interplay of democratic struggle - the constitutional process in Russia could be prolonged, perhaps dangerously so.

Further arrest in Italy mineral water inquiry

By Haig Simonian in Milan

ITALIAN police have detained Mr Ettore Fortuna, chairman of the country's mineral water industry association, on allegations of paying illegal political contributions.

His arrest follows similar charges on Friday against Mr Bruno Mentasti, managing director of the popular San Pellegrino brand, and Mr Giuliano De Polo, chairman of San Benedetto, and the arrest this month of Mr Carlo Violati, the former chairman of the Ferrarelle brand. Mr Violati allegedly paid 120,000 (\$130,000) to speed Health Ministry investigations into the quality of his company's water.

The bubble burst for all four men after magistrates began interrogating Mr Giovanni Marone, the secretary of Mr Francesco De Lorenzo, the former health minister. According to Mr Marone's testimony, which has been widely leaked, Mr Fortuna paid about 125,000 to facilitate the introduction of new European Community mineral water standards into Italy.

The arrests reinforce allegations that the Health Ministry was one of the most lucrative

sources of funds for Italian politicians.

Mr De Lorenzo, who resigned in February after allegations of a jobs-for-votes scam in his native Naples, has since been investigated for a string of alleged kickbacks and alleged illegal political contributions.

Among those arrested so far following testimony from Mr Marone are a number of top drugs company executives and executives from some of Italy's biggest advertising and public relations companies.

All are accused of paying kickbacks to the ministry to influence drugs policy or win business on Italy's big anti-Aids campaign.

Mr Renato Marzotto, a former finance director of the state-owned Eni energy and chemicals group, is reported to have told magistrates that the company paid \$20m to the Libyan government to prevent the full nationalisation of its assets in the 1970s.

The allegations, which come from normally reliable leaked testimony, claim the money was paid to Mr Abdessalam Jallud, second in command to Libya's leader, Colonel Muammar Gaddafi.

Balladur bonds success is 'vote of confidence'

By David Buchan in Paris

FRENCH Prime Minister Edouard Balladur yesterday confirmed that his special bond issue, linked to privatisation and designed to promote economic recovery, had brought in FF110bn (\$19.3bn) or nearly three times its target.

"A few months ago, the French gave us their votes," Mr Balladur said in reference to his March election victory, "and today they are entrusting us with their money." He claimed that the threefold oversubscription of the loan was "an exceptional sign of confidence" in the government.

But the fact that the "Balladur bond" issue has brought in far more money than any previous state borrowing is also due to its special advantages. These give subscribers a prospect of lower unemployment in coming months. It was therefore time, he said, for the French to stop worrying about the future by spending less and saving more. "They should realise that precautionary saving is now less necessary and that they can consume more."

the real cost to the state - and corresponding advantage to the bond's subscribers - is put by analysts at 7 per cent or more.

The original target for the bond issue had been set at FF40bn. In an interview yesterday with *Journal de Dimanche*, the prime minister said he would use the "surplus" of some FF70bn to "support business activity and to reduce the public debt", for example by repaying companies the value added tax refund they are owed by the state more quickly. This speedier VAT refund had already been announced by the government, however.

The prime minister said the bond issue's success and the lowering of interest rates had both safeguarded the state's welfare system and held the prospect of lower unemployment in coming months. It was therefore time, he said, for the French to stop worrying about the future by spending less and saving more. "They should realise that precautionary saving is now less necessary and that they can consume more."

Spanish judge again rejects KIO plea to try ex-chairman

By Peter Bruce in Madrid

SPAIN'S senior financial crimes judge has for the third time this year rejected efforts by the Kuwaiti Investment Office to open criminal proceedings against the former chairman of the KIO, Sheikh Fahad Mohammed Al Sabah, and the former manager of the KIO's troubled Spanish industrial investments.

The KIO claims that it lost all \$5m invested in Spain in the mid-1980s because of mismanagement and that up to \$500m of this was stolen. The judge, rejecting a new KIO writ on Friday, said the Kuwaitis had produced no new evidence and there was no evidence in the writ of criminal conduct. The KIO will appeal, for the second time.

The tortuous efforts of the KIO to get an investigation opened in Spain coincide with indications that a civil writ issued against many of the same defendants in London is also likely to become bogged down in arguments over jurisdiction. While the KIO is headquartered in London, most of the allegedly criminal behaviour by former Kuwaiti and Spanish managers took place in Spain.

The new rebuff for the KIO in Spain comes alongside publication of a Kuwaiti parliamentary investigation into the KIO's big losses in Spain, in which a senior KIO official is quoted as saying he was told in 1990 by Sheikh Fahad not to speak of a secret transfer of \$300m from Spain to secret KIO accounts as the money was being used to make "political" payments.

The transfer occurred during the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait, when the emirate was looking for international support to help eject the invaders. While the position of the Kuwaiti government is that no funds were used to make political payments, indeed, stolen, the parliamentary commission report says it could not find a good explanation as to why it had been decided to make criminal charges in Spain and civil ones in the UK. It recommended that the KIO drop its traditional legal advisers, Stephenson Harwood.

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Russian ship tied up in web of creditors' claims

By Ronald van de Krol in Rotterdam

FOR 13 months, the Russian cargo ship Kapitän Kanevsky has been chained to the quayside in Rotterdam harbour while lawyers argue in court about \$4.4m in unpaid bills for the delivery of children's and women's clothing to the former Soviet Union.

The ship, operated by the St Petersburg-based, state-owned Baltic Shipping Company, was impounded in June last year in what is believed to be the first seizure of Russian physical assets over a payments dispute with western creditors.

The dispute is a minefield of complexities, raising difficult questions about the ownership of property and assets under the old communist system and whether they are applicable today. The details centre on the non-payment of goods in the crucial years 1990 and 1991, when the Soviet Union collapsed in chaos and gave way to the Commonwealth of Independent States.

The case is arousing interest in the Netherlands, where at least 50 other companies without export credit insurance are waiting to be paid for F135m (\$185m) worth of goods supplied during the period.

Now the fate of the Kapitän Kanevsky is starting to win attention abroad. Alfred C. Toepfer, the German commodities trader, filed a petition in Rotterdam last week asking for permission to "arrest" a ship of the Russian Federation as part of its dispute with the Russian authorities about non-payment for

deliveries of cigarettes, personal care products and other western goods in 1990 and 1991. No date has yet been set for the court's ruling.

The lawyer for the plaintiff in the Dutch case, a small Amsterdam-based trading company called Pied-Rich BV, maintains that the court battle could have implications for

The proceedings raise questions about property rights under communism

other non-Dutch creditors holding Russian claims.

"The Dutch laws on attachment are very liberal, meaning that a US company could have Russian property arrested in the Netherlands even if the claim does not involve the Netherlands," Mr Ton Steen, of the Amsterdam law firm Steen and Van der Veen, said.

Pied-Rich's dispute is not with its Russian customers or with the Russian shipping company but with the Russian state. It says the former Soviet Ministry of Merchant Marine guaranteed in 1990 it would act as the vehicle for paying the Russian customers' bills. This was agreed as part of a wider arrangement whereby the Dutch company was committed to finding cargo business for Baltic.

When \$4.4m in bills for 1990 and 1991 were not paid, the Dutch company petitioned a Rotterdam court to have the

Kapitän Kanevsky, valued at some \$15m, impounded in Rotterdam harbour. The ship has been under "protective arrest" since June 14 1992.

In court documents, lawyers for the Russian Federation accuse the Dutch company and its lawyers of abusing Dutch laws on property seizure and of attempting to use "blackmail" to get the Russians to settle their debts.

They say the impounding of the ship has already cost the company F11.75m in direct costs as well as at least F13.5m in lost revenue.

The 13th lawsuit associated with the main legal case was heard in a municipal court last week. The proceedings turn partly on whether the ship can be considered Russian state property, raising a host of questions about property rights and leasing under the old communist system.

The main legal case, which centres on whether the ship can be sold at auction if the debt is not repaid, is expected to drag on into 1994.

A parallel arbitration case is pending in Moscow. Although it is being watched by other Dutch companies, the case cannot necessarily be "extrapolated" to those of other creditors, according to one industry observer who is familiar with other unresolved Dutch claims. He noted that the Pied-Rich dispute involves a particularly complicated, tripartite payment system, as does the Toepfer case.

"Other creditors prefer to follow the diplomatic route so that they don't harm future trading relations," he said.

Rain is expected to ease, but east coast heatwave adds to weather problems

US flooding disaster area grows

By George Graham
in Washington

THE US government yesterday declared 44 more Missouri counties disaster areas, adding to the six-state area in the upper Mississippi basin that has been devastated by weeks of rain and floods.

While weather forecasters predicted the rain would slacken over the next few days in the upper Midwest, Mr. Elbert Joe Friday, director of the National Weather Service, warned there was now so much in the river basins that flooding could last for weeks. "It could very well go toward the end of August," he cautioned yesterday.

The heavy rains have soaked acres of farmland and driven the Mississippi to levels that in many locations surpass the peaks recorded in the 1973 floods, the most devastating in recent memory.

Flooding has also closed the water purification centre in Des Moines, Iowa, depriving 250,000 people of clean water.

At the same time, the east coast of the US is caught by a heatwave. A week of temperatures above 95 degrees has taken more lives so far than the flooding in the Midwest.

At St Louis, just below the Mississippi's junction with the Missouri, floods are expected to crest at 45 feet this week, higher than the 43.3 feet peak recorded in 1973. River flow at St Louis is expected to reach 1m cubic feet per second.

The great floods of 1844 are believed to have reached a flow of 1.3m cubic feet per second, but the destruction they caused was much less.

Some critics say developers have invited disaster by building in the flood plain, instead of up on the river bluffs as in the past. Efforts by the Army Corps of Engineers to control flooding with a programme of dams and levees may only have worsened the situation by confining the Mississippi within a narrower channel.

"Rivers are supposed to flood. You cannot control a river the volume and the size of the Mississippi," comments Ms Susie Wilkins of American Rivers, a Washington-based conservation group.

Other critics say the federal government has exacerbated the problem by not enforcing planning restrictions to divert development away from the riskiest areas as a *quid pro quo* for the cheap insurance it has provided since 1963.



Kansas City business owners survey damage after Friday night brought seven more inches of rain

Search for new NY Fed chief near end

By Patrick Harverson in New York

THE successor to Mr Gerald Corrigan as president of the Federal Reserve Bank of New York, one of the most powerful positions in international finance, is likely to emerge this week.

Mr Corrigan, who announced his decision to step down in January, is due to leave on August 20. If the search committee fails to make a recommendation at Thursday's monthly meeting of the bank's board of directors, it will have to

wait until August 19. That would not leave enough time before Mr Corrigan's departure for the confirmation of the candidate by the governors of the Federal Reserve Board in Washington.

Three names have emerged as front-runners for the post, which is second only to the Fed chairmanship in importance in the US central bank system. But the selection process has taken longer than normal. One observer with a close knowledge of the Fed said last week: "I heard that there was a real

fight over this. Someone clearly had a rough time making up their minds."

The front-runners are: Mr William McDonough, Mr Corrigan's number two in New York and the official responsible for implementing Fed policy in the domestic bond market and foreign exchange markets; Mr Thomas Meltzer, president of the Federal Reserve Bank of St Louis; and Mr Gary Stern, president of the Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis. Mr McDonough is tipped by most insiders to win the job.

Others believed to have been considered include Ms Karen Horn, chairman of Bank One in Ohio and former president of the Federal Reserve Bank of Cleveland; Mr David Mullins, vice-chairman of the Federal Reserve; and Mr Richard Syron, president of the Federal Reserve Bank of Boston.

In the past, the New York Fed president has played a key role in helping the financial system survive crises, including the October 1987 stock market crash.

US-Cuba phone links could mean softer line

At first glance, relations between Cuba and the US have rarely been icier. Cuba's devastated economy is driving more people to flee the country, leading to more shootings by Cuban border guards and a flurry of diplomatic protests from the US.

"Because things are so desperate in Cuba and more people think the end is at hand, there have been more incidents that could provoke tension," comments Mr Ernest Preeg, former chief economist at the US Agency for International Development and author of a recent study on Cuba's economic prospects once the US trade embargo is lifted.

A State Department spokesman last week criticised Cuba's "barbaric" attacks both on US-registered boats trying to pick up refugees and on swimmers trying to reach asylum in the US Guantanamo naval base, on the island's southeastern coast.

This drew a sharp rebuttal from Mr Roberto Robaina, Cuba's foreign minister, who called the US complaint "an infamy, a provocation and, at the very least, a shameful lack of seriousness".

Telecommunications between Cuba and the US are also at one of their worst levels in years: last year's Hurricane Andrew destroyed AT&T's microwave links from south Florida and Cuba has now sharply cut the volume of US calls it will allow to be routed through Italy.

However, the US State Department is preparing new guidelines that could greatly ease telephone links with Cuba and mark a step along what some Cuba experts believe might turn out to be a path towards warmer relations. Significantly, some AT&T officials

expect the new guidelines to allow Cuba to take some of the revenue from the telephone calls, instead of freezing it all in an escrow, as happens today.

Also indicative of a thaw has been President Fidel Castro's recent decision to allow some prominent dissidents to travel abroad, while last month, in a move that could have far-reaching economic consequences, he asked the national assembly to consider legalising use of the dollar in Cuba.

Congress is starting to listen to more moderate Cuban voices, reports George Graham

US Cuban policy has always been dominated by an argument over whether to use threats to finish the work of the trade embargo and topple the Castro government, or incentives to bring about change more quickly.

In political terms, the former school of thought, expounded by the Cuban-American National Foundation, a well-financed Miami exile group led by Mr Jorge Mas Canosa, has always dominated. It still commands a clear majority in Congress, but has lost some of its strongest supporters, such as Mr Dante Fascell, the Florida congressman who chaired the House of Representatives foreign affairs committee until his retirement this year.

Members of Congress have started to listen to some of the more moderate voices in the Cuban exile community. The

House recently voted to kill funding for TV Marti, the US-financed propaganda station beamed to Cuba and closely aligned with Mr Canosa.

The new administration does not appear to have developed a clear Cuba policy yet. During the election campaign, Mr Bill Clinton took an even tougher line on Cuba than President George Bush, but his appointees include some who have in the past favoured more dialogue with Cuba.

Telephone links are one area where the two camps agree. The Cuban-American National Foundation, which in general opposes any easing of the embargo, backs easier and cheaper telecommunications, and this measure was included in a bill passed last year which otherwise sought to tighten the economic noose on Cuba.

Demand for phone links among the Cuban exile community is high. Even before the limited AT&T microwave link was destroyed by the hurricane, the company was able to connect only around 500,000 calls out of 80m attempted each year.

The cost of getting through to Cuba has risen sharply. AT&T says that if it could serve the island directly, its charges would average \$1.55 (£1) a minute; with the service via Italy cut to a trickle, many exiles now dial pirate services in Canada, at prices ranging from \$3.50 to \$7.50 a minute.

Cuba prefers the Canadian links, because it receives a share of the revenue in the form of desperately needed hard currency. The restriction on AT&T's Italian traffic is seen as a bargaining ploy to weaken US insistence that all revenue go into the escrow account, which has an estimated \$60m already.

Last-chance talks for NY Post

NEW YORK Governor Mario Cuomo was yesterday involved in last-ditch talks to keep alive the New York Post after Mr Rupert Murdoch abandoned an attempt to buy the ailing newspaper on Friday, Martin Dickson writes from New York.

Mr Murdoch, running the paper temporarily under a contract from the bankruptcy court,

ceased publication on Friday, saying the Post's 11 unions did not give him enough cost concessions to make the paper viable.

However, Mr Cuomo was at the centre of attempts to revive the negotiations and some officials hoped Mr Murdoch might be tempted back if the unions gave further ground. See Observer

Nigerian parties fall in line

Politicians stand by man who created their jobs, reports Paul Adams

MILITARY coups have ousted civilians from power twice in Nigeria's recent history but the annulment of last month's presidential elections may have deprived Mr Moshood Abiola of power even before he was sworn in to office.

By co-opting both political parties, Mr Abiola's Social Democratic party (SDP) and the rival National Republican Convention (NRC), to back the idea of an interim government, President Ibrahim Babangida may succeed in overturning the mandate of the ballot box sided by civilian leaders.

The manipulation of the June polls had provoked serious divisions within the senior ranks of the military and mass protests on the streets of Lagos.

When Gen Babangida threatened to dissolve all democratic institutions, in which the SDP gained a clear majority, were so flawed that if the results

This is the fourth setback since 1980 to Nigeria's transition to democracy, which is unlikely to reach completion by the August 27 deadline. Gen Babangida proposes to hand over to an unelected interim government which would be approved by the military regime.

Except for an elected head of state, Mr Babangida has created every other democratic institution during his overhaul of Nigerian politics and last week they came to his aid.

Party officials, elected leaders of local and state governments and members of the two-tier national and state assemblies enjoy the status and privileges of office while the standard of living among most Nigerians is in sharp decline.

In a speech broadcast at the end of June, the president said the elections, in which the SDP gained a clear majority, were so flawed that if the results

were upheld it would provide an unsound basis for democracy after August. The NRC argued for fresh elections, which the SDP rejected.

Then came the ultimatum: dissolution of all democratic institutions unless the parties agreed to co-operate with the government by Friday morning. From all over Nigeria, anxious politicians converged on Abuja, the federal capital, to talk to the government which had created their positions.

"State governors were lobbying hard, late into Thursday night, to prevent their jobs being scrapped," said a federal government adviser in Abuja.

The parties agreed to form an interim government provided that "democratic institutions remain in place" and subject to agreement on "the composition and tenure of the proposed government". However, there were signs of

divisions among the parties trying to reach agreement over the weekend, with some SDP members still calling the deal a sell-out and the NRC demanding parity with its rival.

As he did after the annulment of the polls, Gen Babangida has summoned all his senior security service officers to Abuja before announcing his next move.

The role of Mr Abiola is unclear. The Sultan of Sokoto, head of Islam in Nigeria, made a rare political speech last Thursday in support of him.

The sultan is the foremost traditional ruler in northern Nigeria, where Mr Abiola as a southerner was expected to lack support. In the June polls the SDP won the majority of states in the north, including Kano, the home state of his opponent Mr Bashir Tofa. As Gen Babangida had promised six years ago, Nigerian politics had produced a leader who cut across ethnic boundaries.

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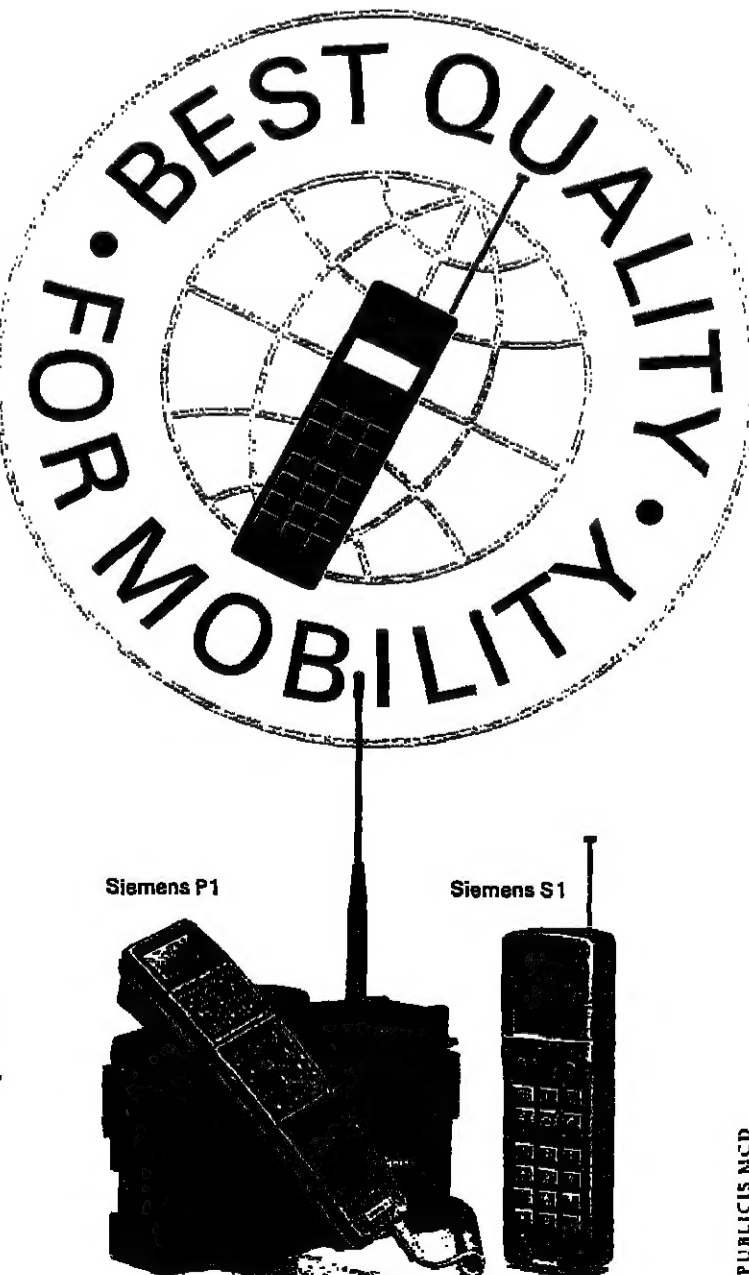
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NEWS: INTERNATIONAL

Clinton tough towards N Korea

By John Burton in Seoul

PRESIDENT Bill Clinton yesterday offered more sticks than carrots to North Korea to persuade it to accept full nuclear inspections, as he ended his visit to South Korea.

With US and North Korean officials preparing to hold discussions on the nuclear issue in Geneva on Wednesday, Mr Clinton and Mr Warren Christopher, the US secretary of state, reaffirmed that Pyongyang must fully comply with international nuclear inspections or face UN sanctions.

"If we just stay strong and we stay resolute and we stay firm, we know that will work," said Mr Clinton as he toured the demilitarised zone that separates North and South Korea. "Eventually, we have to hope that North Korea will take the sensible course."

"When you examine the nature of the American security commitment to Korea... it is pointless for them to try to develop nuclear weapons because if they ever use them it would be the end of their country."

The president promised there would be no cuts in the number of US troops in South Korea, now totalling 87,000, until the nuclear issue was resolved.



AT THE FRONT LINE: President Clinton is shown US defensive positions in the demilitarised zone between North and South Korea

Mr Christopher said in a meeting with his South Korean counterpart that any improvement in US-North Korean relations would depend on the progress in inter-Korean ties, ruling out the possibility that Washington might separately

recognise Pyongyang in exchange for its full acceptance of nuclear inspections. The US has attached other conditions to better relations with North Korea, including improvement in human rights and renunciation of terrorism.

The US last month persuaded North Korea to suspend its withdrawal from the nuclear non-proliferation treaty during high-level talks in New York.

Mr Christopher said Washington would not tolerate North Korea dragging its feet endlessly during the new round of talks. If no appreciable progress was achieved within a reasonable period of time, the nuclear issue would be referred to the UN Security Council for action.

UN team flies out of Iraq

By Mark Nicholson in Cairo

IRAQ yesterday sustained its defiance of United Nations weapons inspectors, and brought closer the threat of a UN-backed strike against its military installations, by refusing to allow UN experts to seal equipment at two missile testing sites south of Baghdad.

A UN team led by Mr Mark Silver, a US weapons specialist, abruptly flew out of Baghdad yesterday after failing to persuade the Iraqi authorities to allow switches at the two sites to be fixed down and sealed with wax.

Mr Silver's three-member team spent less than 24 hours in Iraq and left the moment it decided the Iraqis would not budge.

"I was not allowed to do what I went in for, and that is why I came out immediately," Mr Silver told reporters soon after arriving back at UN headquarters in Bahrain.

The team's failure to accomplish its task is certain to prompt a renewed collision between the UN and Iraq and raise the possibility of a military strike against the two sites.

Attacks on Israel blamed on Syria

ISRAELI yesterday blamed Syria for an upsurge in attacks by Arab guerrillas based in southern Lebanon and said it was considering how best to retaliate, writes Julian Ozanne from Jerusalem.

Mr Uri Lubrani, Israel's chief negotiator with Lebanon at the Middle East peace talks, said Syria was responsible for the latest escalation of artillery duels, which last week left five Israeli soldiers dead. "This escalation requires different treatment than others up to now," he said.

Syria, which has up to 40,000 troops in Lebanon, yesterday responded by saying Israel's self-declared security zone in southern Lebanon, scene of the clashes, was an "explosive trap".

Meanwhile, Mr Dennis Ross, US co-ordinator of the peace talks, is currently shuttling between Middle East capitals as part of an intense diplomatic effort to break the deadlock in the US-backed peace process.

Mubarak backed for re-election

Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak yesterday won the backing of 97 per cent of the People's Assembly to run as the sole candidate in the presidential elections, clearing the way for him to take up his third six-year term.

The petition makes the house's backing for Mr Mubarak all but certain on July 21, when it must formally endorse his candidature by a two-thirds majority. His nomination will then be put to a referendum in October, at which a simple majority will return him. He won 97.1 per cent of the votes in October 1987.

Clerics join Saudi cabinet

Saudi Arabia's King Fahd has made two senior Muslim clerics cabinet ministers and ordered the setting up of an Islamic guidance ministry, Reuters reports from Dubai.

Sheikh Abdel Aziz Bin Abdullah Bin Baz, a member of the influential Higher Council of Ulama, was named president of the council, a position that will now carry ministerial rank. The decree also named Sheikh Bin Baz as the General Mufti of Saudi Arabia, the country's most senior religious post.

FT writers examine the differing perceptions in the US and Japan on the future of the framework trade deal

Tokyo claims advantage in Clinton sees new dawn in relations

By Charles Leadbeater in Tokyo

JAPANESE officials yesterday presented the weekend trade framework agreement with the US as a turning point, mainly because they believe it marks the first success of a more assertive Japanese approach to the US.

Japan will claim that it came out best from the main dispute which has dogged the negotiations since they started in April: whether numerical targets should set goals for Japanese policies to open up its markets to imports and reduce its current account surplus.

The Japanese approach on this issue marks a break with the past. In previous trade disputes, the Japanese have started by talking tough but eventually backed down. This time they started by publicly resisting numerical targets and did not back down when the US applied pressure.

Japan will claim that because the agreement does not explicitly mention numerical targets, it has won the day. The reality is that this central dispute over targets will continue, but on a different footing. Tokyo has successfully resisted US demands that it should set its economic policies with the target of halving its current account surplus. However, this does not mean

Japan's powerful Finance Ministry has had it all its own way. Mr Kiichi Miyazawa, the prime minister, in spite of his weakness in the run-up to next weekend's elections, has forced the powerful bureaucrats to concede for the sake of the agreement.

The Finance Ministry had proposed saying that it would promote domestic growth, which would in turn "contribute" to reducing the surplus by increasing demand for imports. The wording of the agreement is substantially tougher than Japanese bureaucrats wanted.

The agreement says Japan will "actively pursue" strong and sustainable demand-led growth, which is "intended to achieve over the medium term a highly significant decrease in the current account surplus".

The short-term implications for Japanese fiscal and monetary policy are clear.

The upheaval in Japan's political system means that for weeks, if not months, the politicians will not be in a strong enough position to force the Finance Ministry to consider a further shot of government spending to revive the economy.

But the likelihood of a further pump-priming package in the autumn or early next year is now much higher. As fiscal policy is so politically constrained, in the short term the agreement will increase

pressure on the Bank of Japan for a further cut in interest rates, which are at an record low of 2.5 per cent. Japan has also resisted numerical targets for policies to open the domestic market to imports, especially vehicle parts, high technology goods and financial services.

The agreement says policies to open markets will be assessed using sets of "objective criteria", a phrase introduced to the talks by the Japanese. The content and role of these "criteria" is almost certain to be the subject of further rows between the two sides.

The US has backed down from its earlier call for Japan to accept as a goal a 33 per cent increase in its imports of manufactured goods over the next three years. The agreement does not commit Japan to making sure a share of its domestic market in particular sectors, such as automotive components, is taken by foreign products.

The Japanese did not get everything they wanted. Tokyo wanted a US commitment that the "criteria" would not be interpreted as targets. The US has resisted this demand, so it is open to Washington to try to turn the criteria into goals to guide Japanese import promotion policy.

So the framework does not settle the central dispute about whether targets should be used, it merely puts the argument on a different footing.

By Jurek Martin in Seoul

"THIS is the rules of the game, not the game itself," insisted Mr Bowman Cutler, deputy head of the White House's national economic council. Reading from the same book, Mr Roger Altman, deputy Treasury secretary, pronounced: "It's an agreement about the rules, now we get to play the game."

The rules referred to are the new US-Japan negotiating framework to resolve bilateral issues announced with some fanfare, after all-night bargaining, in Tokyo on Saturday morning.

Both men, along with other US officials speaking privately, contend that the agreement, stamping the seal on President Bill Clinton's performance at the Tokyo Group of Seven summit, marks a new dawn in US-Japan relations in which the economic and commercial components assume, as the president wanted, a far more important dimension.

The "framework" agreement for subsequent negotiations is precisely that: it does not establish precise goals for shifts in Japanese macro-economic policy, nor does it lay down criteria by which sectors of the Japanese economy can be made more open to US goods and services, and by extension to those of other countries.

But in tough language it lays out a negotiating timetable for these to be achieved and it commits Japan to making what the agreement calls

highly significant macro and micro economic policy changes. As such, in the US view, it places Japan under a far tougher obligation than all previous attempts to settle bilateral disputes.

On the macro-economic side, the compact envisages mutually supportive policies whereby the US seeks to reduce its budget deficit while Japan aims to cut its global current account surplus.

It's an agreement about the rules, now we get to play the game - Roger Altman

At its current level of about \$130bn (\$88bn), Japan's global current account surplus is equivalent to just over 3 per cent of GNP. The US envisages that this can be reduced, mostly by appropriate fiscal policies, to the target zone in "four to five years".

The unstated US agenda is that Japan should accomplish this less by its traditional method of front-loading public works spending and more by income tax cuts. While it may seem ironic for an administration that is proposing one of the largest tax increases in US history at home to press the reverse course on Japan, the US view is that this is the most effective means of generating the sort of consumer-led demand in Japan that will suck in imports.

What all this might do to the bilateral Japanese trade surplus

with the US - \$50bn last year and rising fast - has not been made explicit. A recent estimate by the Washington-based Institute for International Economics contends that a cut to around \$40bn is the most optimistic outcome over a few years.

Much may depend on another, more controversial, aspect of the agreement - its insistence on greater sectoral access for imported

products and services. The agreement makes no mention of numerical targets as such. However, it does accept that multiple criteria should be used to accept progress in opening Japanese markets. The US will want to use these criteria to set goals for policy, something the Japanese will resist.

Agreements in priority areas are to be reached over the next six months and ratified when the US president and the Japanese prime minister meet early next year, with the balance to be settled at a second get-together next July.

After two years both governments will decide whether to extend this framework agreement beyond the autumn of 1995.

The five principal components of the sectoral access deal cover:

- Japanese government procurement, particularly in relation to

purchases of foreign computers, supercomputers, satellites, medical technology and telecommunications.

- Regulatory reform, covering financial services, insurance, the distribution network and competition policy.

- "Other major sectors", particularly cars and car parts.

- Economic harmonisation, addressing issues affecting two-way foreign direct investment, including intellectual property and access to technology.

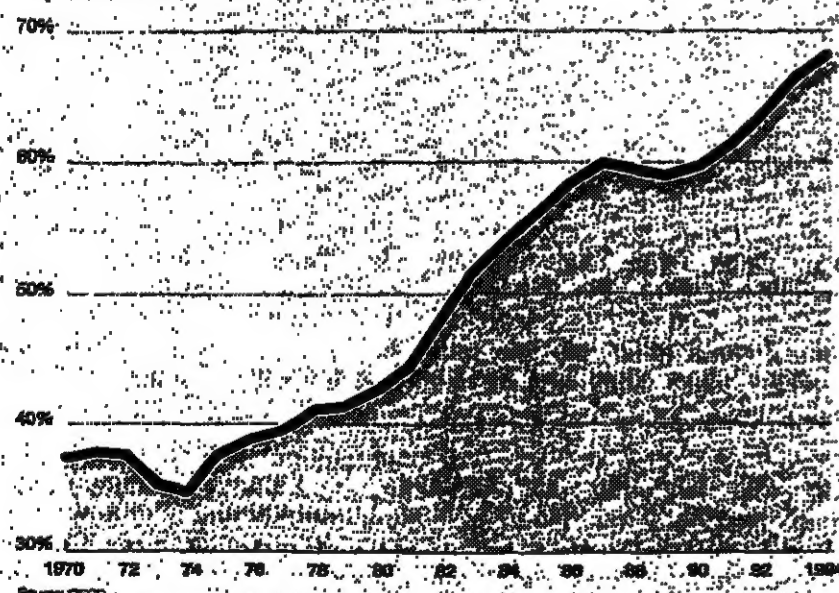
- Implementation - the monitoring of existing and future agreements.

The US team, led by Mr Cutler and Mr Altman and with substantial contributions from other treasury and trade officials, did not necessarily expect to conclude an agreement in Tokyo, especially with the Japanese elections just over a week away. The Japanese, they report, were particularly tough on the question of exemptions from US trade laws.

They may hang tougher still as the sectoral negotiations get serious, which is why the US reserves the right of retaliation under existing trade regulations. Mr Clinton may have made a powerful general case in Tokyo in identifying what he saw as the common cause between Japanese consumers and American workers but the appeal of that cause may fade as the two sides finally take to the field under the new "rules of the game".

The soaring gross public debt of OECD members

As per cent of GDP



The looming crisis in industrial country public debt

What cannot continue will not do so. The accumulation of public debt by the governments of the industrial countries will have to stop. The question is how will it be stopped and when?

Over the past quarter century, the ratio of aggregate gross public debt to gross domestic product in OECD countries has risen from a little under 40 per cent, to 68 per cent (see chart). In only two brief periods has the ratio fallen: during the inflationary economic expansion of the early 1970s and again during the expansion of the second half of the 1980s.

Unfortunately, the rise in the debt ratio during recessions has more than offset the paucity declines during the expansions. No wonder the June OECD Economic Outlook remarks wryly on the need to avoid "the kind of mistake made in the late 1980s when some of the unexpected buoyancy of public revenues associated with above-average growth was used to reduce tax rates rather than to ensure greater fiscal consolidation and to reduce debt."

True, net public debt is not as daunting

as gross public debt: for 1994 the OECD forecasts the former at 39 per cent. The net debt ratio has not risen as much either, by 9 percentage points between 1984 and 1994, against 14 percentage points for gross debt. But the trend is similarly adverse.

Of the seven industrial countries whose heads of government met in Tokyo last week, only Japan had managed a significant improvement in its public debt position between 1984 and 1994. Belgium and Italy already have outstanding net public debt greater than their GDPs. Particularly important, in view of the country's size, is the US deterioration, from a net public sector debt ratio of 24.9 per cent in 1984 to the 40.7 per cent forecast for next year.

High real interest rates put all debtors, including governments, on a treadmill. Since the beginning of the 1980s, long-term real interest rates have averaged between 4 and 7 per cent, says the OECD, with short-term rates little lower. In the stable 1990s, by contrast, real interest rates were 1 to 3 per cent. Consequently, real interest rates have been well above underlying

rates of economic growth for a long time. Even though estimated long-term real interest rates have recently fallen, they remain higher than rates of economic growth, inevitably so during a recession.

The OECD explains these high real interest rates by:

- the fiscal and monetary policy mix, with fiscal deficits, in particular, averaging 3 per cent of GDP since the mid-1970s;
- investor demand for a premium against inflation risk, particularly important in the early 1980s; and
- the liberalisation and globalisation of capital markets.

If real interest rates on public debt exceed the economy's likely growth rate, as they have recently done, governments must run a primary fiscal surplus - an excess of revenue over non-interest expenditure - if the ratio of debt to GDP is to be kept stable. Should they run large primary deficits during a recession, they must run offsetting surpluses thereafter. The task can be daunting. Mr Major's government is now running a primary deficit of 5.7 per

cent of GDP. This is two percentage points larger than the surplus in 1988.

The danger is of a vicious circle from deficits to interest rates and back again. If governments fail to run large enough primary surpluses, global real interest rates tend to rise. As public debt increases, the fear of debt crises also pushes up risk premiums in interest rates. Unsurprisingly, Italy is the only major industrial country whose estimated long-term real interest rates, at 6 per cent, are above their 1980-92 average, despite recession.

Governments that borrow in their own currencies do not default. They inflate. At present, investors are feeling tolerant towards most OECD governments. Whether they continue to do so depends less on whether current deficits are cyclical or structural, which nobody knows, and rather more on when investors think they will end. Governments that expect creditors to be infinitely forbearing are due for a shock.

Martin Wolf

INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC INDICATORS: PRICES AND COMPETITIVENESS

Yearly figures are shown in Index form with the common base year of 1985. The real exchange rate is an index throughout; other quarterly and monthly figures show the percentage change over the corresponding period in the previous year and are positive unless otherwise stated.

UNITED STATES					JAPAN					GERMANY					FRANCE					ITALY					UNITED KINGDOM					
Consumer prices	Producer prices	Unit labour costs	Real exchange rate	Real wage rate	Consumer prices	Producer prices	Unit labour costs	Real exchange rate	Real wage rate	Consumer prices	Producer prices	Unit labour costs	Real exchange rate	Real wage rate	Consumer prices	Producer prices	Unit labour costs	Real exchange rate	Real wage rate	Consumer prices	Producer prices	Unit labour costs	Real exchange rate	Real wage rate	Consumer prices	Producer prices	Unit labour costs	Real exchange rate	Real wage rate	
1985	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	
1986	101.9	98.6	102.2	98.4	83.7	100.8	95.3	101.4	103.3	119.2	99.9	97.5	103.6	103.7	107.0	102.5	97.2	104.5	101.5	102.9	106.1	100.2	104.8	102.7	103.6	103.4	104.3	107.7	104.5	
1987	105.6	100.7	103.8	96.7	74.9	101.2	92.5	103.1	100.6	123.3	100.1	95.1	108.0	106.9	110.5	105.9	97.8	107.8	103.0	104.1	111.0	103.2	111.8	105.5	104.9	107.7	106.3	116.2	108.9	
1988	109.9	103.2	106.9	89.1	71.4	102.2	92.3	107.8	96.2	101.4	104.2	98.3	117.3	107.7	108.4	112.6	108.4	115.4	105.5	99.8	124.2	113.1	125.6	112.3	107.4	121.8	119.0	137.2	113.9	
1989	115.2	108.5	110.0	101.1	75.0	104.9	94.2	114.0	96.1	104.2	98.2	107.1	101.0	123.8	110.2	110.3	116.5	107.1	120.6	110.0	102.9	131.8	117.8	134.7	118.9	108.5	133.3	126.0	150.1	
1990	121.5	113.8	113.8	104.0	71.8	108.2	96.7	120.1	96.2	102.9	107.0	103.4	131.8	114.7	108.4	120.2	105.8	125.8	114.3	101.3	140.2	121.7	147.7	131.3	107.7	141.2	138.0	182.4	130.3	
1991	126.6	118.3	117.3	107.3	71.3	111.8	96.5	124.2	101.8	110.7	115.1	104.6	121.1	110.5	123.0	104.0	130.3	104.7	101.3	147.7	120.0	155.9	136.8	102.4	148.4	138.0	173.1	132.2	102.8	
3rd qtr:1992	3.1	1.6	2.3	-1.1	68.1	2.0	-0.9	0.7	8.8	117.1	3.5	1.0	n.a.	6.1	111.2	2.7	-0.9	n.a.	2.8	105.0	3.2	1.9	3.7	2.7	104.4	3.8	3.5	6.2	1.9	105.7
4th qtr:1992	3.0	1.6	2.2	-1.0	72.2	1.8	-0.9	-0.1	10.4	122.1	3.7	0.5	n.a.	8.2	113.5	2.2	-1.5	n.a.	2.8	108.2	4.8	2.2	2.9	8.4	39.0	3.0	5.7	-0.6	92.9	
1st qtr:1993	3.2	1.8	2.8	-1.7	74.3	1.2	-1.1	-0.5	7.0	126.1	4.3	0.5	n.a.	10.0	113.3	2.1	-2.8	n.a.	105.1	4.3	3.1	2.8	8.9	1.9	3.7	4.8	-2.8	92.7		
2nd qtr:1993	3.2	1.8	2.8	-1.7	72.9	1.0	-1.1	-0.6	7.0	135.5	4.2	n.a.	n.a.	111.8	111.8	2.1	-2.8	n.a.	108.3	4.1	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	85.9	1.9	3.7	4.8	92.7	
July 1992	3.2	1.7	1.7	-1.4	68.5	2.0	-0.8	2.0	8.7	116.8	3.3	1.1	8.9	110.5	2.9	n.a.	n.a.	104.4	5.4	1.9	4.0	n.a.	106.2	3.7	3.5	6.2	2.9	107.8		
August	3.2	1.6	2.5	-1.4	67.7	1.8	-0.9	-1.8	11.4	115.4	3.5	1.1	5.2	111.1	2.7	n.a.	n.a.	104.6	5.2	1.8	3.5	n.a.	105.5	3.6	3.4	6.5	1.8	107.0		
September	3.0	1.6	2.5	-1.5	68.1	2.2	-0.9	1.1	6.7	116.1	3.5	0.8	4.3	112.0	2.6	n.a.	n.a.	104.2	5.1	1.9	3.7	n.a.	105.4	3.6	3.4	6.5	1.7	107.0		
October	3.2	1.7	2.5	-1.6	70.3	1.2	-1.1	1.2	10.5	119.3	3.7	0.5	7.8	113.7	2.4	n.a.	n.a.	108.6	4.9	2.0	4.1	n.a.	102.8	3.5	3.3	5.8	-0.4	102.3		
November	3.0	1.4	1.7	-2.4	73.1	0.8	-1.1	1.2	10.4	122.4	3.7	0.5	10.3	112.4	2.1	n.a.	n.a.	108.0	4.8	2.2	2.1	n.a.	104.7	3.0	3.3	6.3	0.1	93.8		
December	2.9	1.6	2.5	-2.0	73.9	0.9	-1.2	-1.0	10.3		3.7	0.5	6.6	113.6	2.0	n.a.	n.a.	107.9	4.8	2.5	2.4	n.a.	91.4	2.6	3.5	5.8	-0.4	91.4		
January 1993	3.3	2.0	3.4	-1.1	74.8	1.0	-1.1	-3.6	10.1	122.0	4.4	0.8	12.1	113.4	2.1	n.a.	n.a.	108.5	4.2	2.8	2.8	n.a.	91.0	1.7	3.6	5.0	-1.4	93.4		
February	3.2	1.8	2.5	-1.6	74.8	1.2	-1.2	1.0	1.9	125.5	4.2	0.5	13.4	114.4	2.1	n.a.	n.a.	108.6	4.4	2.9	2.8	n.a.	93.8	2.6	3.8	5.2	-0.9	94.9		
March	3.1	2.0	2.5	-1.3	74.0	1.2	-1.2	1.0	1.9	126.5	4.2	0.3	5.9	112.2	2.2	n.a.	n.a.	108.6	4.4	2.9	2.8	n.a.	96.0	1.8	3.7	5.1	-2.7	90.4		
April	3.2	2.4	2.5	-1.8	72.5	0.8	-1.3	-1.9	7.3	125.6	4.3	0.1	11.3	111.1	2.1	n.a.	n.a.	110.0	4.2	2.8	2.8	n.a.	94.3	1.3	3.6	4.2	-3.0	92.4		
May	3.2	2.0	2.5	-1.8	72.6	1.0	-1.2	1.0	1.9	126.4	4.2	-0.2	11.7	111.7	2.0	n.a.	n.a.	108.3	4.0	2.8	2.8	n.a.	98.0	1.3	3.8	5.2	-2.6	95.5		
June	3.2	2.0	2.5	-1.8	73.4	1.1	-1.0			130.2	4.1		11.0	110.6	2.0	n.a.	n.a.	108.7	4.2			n.a.	98.3	1.3	4.0			94.9		

Goldman urged to return Maxwell funds

By Norma Cohen

GOLDMAN SACHS, the US-based investment bank, has been asked to return up to \$56m to two pension schemes formerly controlled by the late Mr Robert Maxwell.

The request, made by two former Maxwell pension schemes, relates to transactions in 1990 in which Goldman Sachs acted as purchaser for shares in Maxwell Communications Corporation from the

Mirror Group Pension Scheme and the Maxwell Communications Corporation Staff Scheme.

It is not clear on whose behalf Goldman Sachs was acting, but the shares were later repurchased by two Liechtenstein-based trusts controlled by Maxwell family interests.

This is the first time Goldman Sachs has been approached for payment in connection with the Maxwell family interests and their pension schemes.

The requests have been made in letters to Goldman Sachs from the pension schemes, which are now seeking detailed discussions.

Goldman is not believed to have refused the request. The Mirror Group Pension Scheme last year filed a writ against five UK and international banks seeking about \$37m for assets which it claims were wrongfully taken from the scheme.

It is believed Sir John Cuck-

ney, chairman of the trust which raises money for the Maxwell pensioners, is seeking talks with all banks against which the pension schemes are likely to pursue claims.

According to testimony last autumn before the parliamentary select committee on social security, Goldman purchased the shares from the two pension schemes but payment was made to a third party, Bishopgate Investment Trust, a private entity which

acted for the Maxwell family interests.

Goldman Sachs has said it paid the funds to BIT under the instructions of Mr Maxwell's son Mr Kevin Maxwell, who had been a trustee of both pension schemes at the time.

It is believed that the request for the return of the assets is based on two key questions raised by both schemes: first, whether Goldman Sachs could be branded a "constructive trustee" with a specific duty to

safeguard scheme assets, and second, whether it obtained formal authorisation from the full trustee boards of both schemes to act on instructions of individual trustees for certain kinds of activities.

Neither Goldman Sachs nor trustees to the two schemes would comment on whether there had been talks between them over the assets. Auditors have found \$440m missing from pension schemes controlled by Mr Robert Maxwell.

Britain in brief



IT spending 'may be out of control'

Spending on information technology - telecommunications, computers and software - rose by 9 per cent last year to about \$4.5bn and may be running out of control, according to a study today by Price Waterhouse Management Consultants.

Its latest annual IT Review, based on a survey of 1,000 executives in the private and public sectors, found that budgets had overrun for the third year in succession.

The latest increase contrasts with a rise of just 1 per cent forecast by the same executives at the start of last year. It brings the increase over the last three years to nearly 50 per cent, and underlines the difficulties facing IT executives in controlling costs.

Protest urged on aid funding

Britain should suspend its \$520m contribution to the International Development Association of the World Bank until it improves its poor record on aid, according to Friends of the Earth, the environmental group.

Ahead of today's debate on IDA funding in Parliament, FoE says that the IDA has a worsening record of project failure, and that many of its projects have had a damaging impact on the environment.

Agency work may be split

The work of Companies House, the government's corporate information agency, may be divided between up to 12 private sector businesses, under privatisation proposals being considered by the Department of Trade and Industry.

Responsibility for finding companies which failed to file accounts on time and selling the information they provide would be split between a series of competing registrars.

Warning on governance

The Stock Exchange is considering publicising companies which fail to adequately explain reasons for divergence from the Cadbury code on corporate governance.

Officials are discussing circulating periodic lists of companies which have not complied with the code, which was published last December, and highlighting individual accounts which do not include a statement.

Tabloid price war looms

Mr Rupert Murdoch, the newspaper proprietor, has launched what could turn into a bitter tabloid circulation war in Britain by announcing a 5p price cut for The Sun, part of the News International stable.

The move is designed to boost flagging popular newspaper sales in the difficult summer market and put pressure on The Sun's main rivals - the Daily Star and Daily Mirror. Mr David Montgomery, chief executive of Mirror Group Newspapers, said the Daily Mirror had no intention of responding.

Gas charge claims denied

British Gas has rejected allegations that the price increases for competitors using its pipeline, which it withdrew last week, would be reinstated after the Monopolies and Mergers Commission

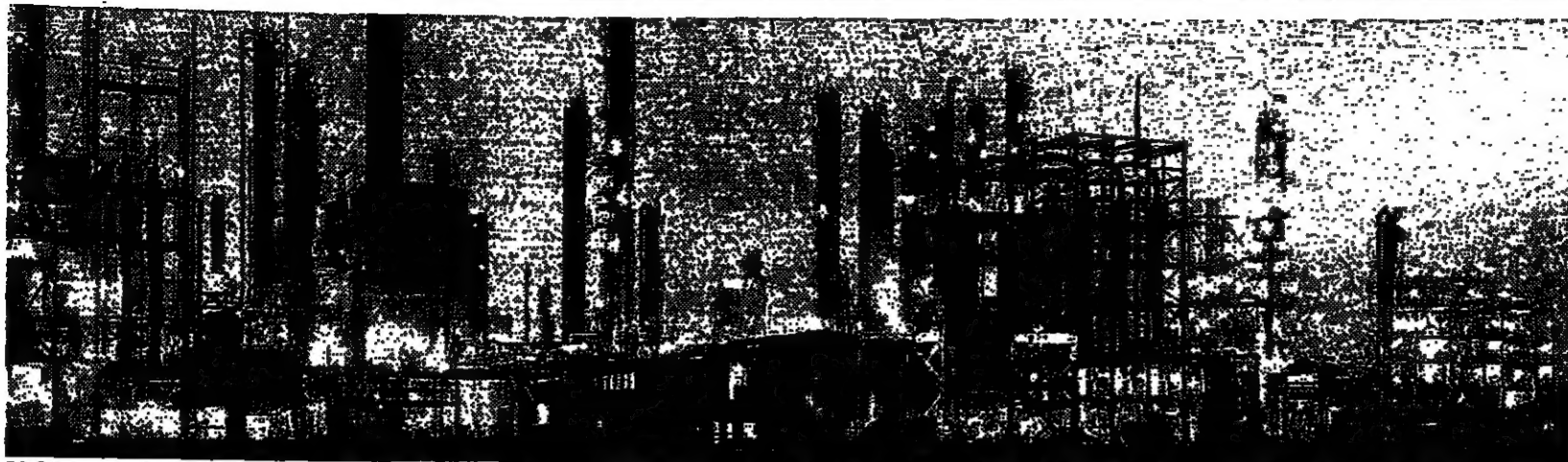
BP plans sharp cut in ethylene production

By Paul Abrahams

BP CHEMICALS, a division of one of Britain's largest companies, intends to shut down nearly half its ethylene capacity at Baglan Bay in South Wales, removing about 150,000 tonnes a year of the raw material from the European market.

BP Chemicals claims the market in Europe for ethylene, the raw material for most plastics, is suffering from significant over-capacity, poor demand and low prices.

The smaller of the company's two production "trains" at the Baglan Bay site, which have a combined capacity of 300,000 tonnes a year, will not be restarted this autumn following a maintenance shutdown in September. BP insists



Lights out at Baglan Bay: BP says plans to shut down almost half its ethylene capacity will not affect staff in South Wales, one of Britain's jobless blackspots

the shutdown will not affect its 500 staff at the complex, one of the largest employers in the South Wales region.

The production line will be kept operable in case market demand and prices improve.

Mr Stephen Pettit, chief executive of BP Petrochemicals has admitted the site is the division's most marginal. However, it is reluctant to close the com-

plex completely. The remaining train, with a capacity of about 150,000 tonnes will continue to provide ethylene for downstream activities including ethanol, vinyl acetate and styrene.

BP said the maintenance cycle for the larger train would be increased from three years to four years as part of a cost-cutting move.

Most European ethylene manufacturers are not covering their cash-costs because of poor prices. Two new complexes - BP's 350,000 tonnes a year expansion at Grange-mouth, Scotland, and Eni-Chem's 300,000 tonnes a year plant at Brindisi, Italy - have taken European capacity to 18.5m tonnes a year aggravating the supply position further.

The market is likely to worsen when BASF of Germany brings on a further 600,000 tonnes a year capacity at Antwerp later this year.

BP believes the European petrochemicals industry must adopt rapid decisive measures or face slow death. It has specifically called on German manufacturers to cut capacity. Mr Pettit has argued that 2m

tonnes a year of ethylene capacity has to be retired in Europe, and that German companies linked up to the ARG pipeline system should play a significant role in that reduction.

At the end of last year BP decided to close its 50,000 tonnes a year butadiene unit at Baglan Bay with the loss of about 40 jobs.

BA faces dirty tricks questions

By Robert Peston

MR BRIAN Basham, the former public relations adviser to British Airways who was sacked earlier this year for his part in the alleged dirty tricks campaign against rival carrier Virgin Atlantic, has launched a campaign to clear his name and embarrass Sir Colin Marshall, BA's chairman.

Mr Basham has submitted four questions for BA's annual meeting. In his submission, Mr

Basham suggests that BA's account of Sir Colin's role in the dirty tricks campaign has been misleading.

Although BA has admitted its use of computer data about Virgin passengers was wrong, the carrier has denied board involvement.

Mr Basham, says in his submission, which has been sent to Sir Colin, that "it remains entirely implausible to me...that you could not have known" of the misuse of com-

puter data. He also alleges that Mrs Gail Redwood, the company secretary, offered her resignation after directors signed a disclaimer denying all knowledge of the alleged dirty tricks campaign.

Mrs Redwood yesterday refused to comment.

BA's annual meeting will be held on Tuesday. The airline said the company had received questions from 2,000 shareholders, a third of which relate to the Virgin affair.

Thatcher backs EC referendum

By Ralph Atkins

SPLITS in the ruling Tory party over Europe resurfaced last night as Baroness Thatcher, the former prime minister, said she would back attempts to win a referendum on the Maastricht treaty.

Baroness (formerly Mrs Margaret) Thatcher, intends to speak when the House of Lords, Parliament's upper chamber, debates a referendum amendment on Wednesday.

But yesterday she denied her intervention would amount to an attack on Mr John Major.

"It will be a furtherance of what I have believed in for a very long time," she said, adding that "never" sought to damage her successor.

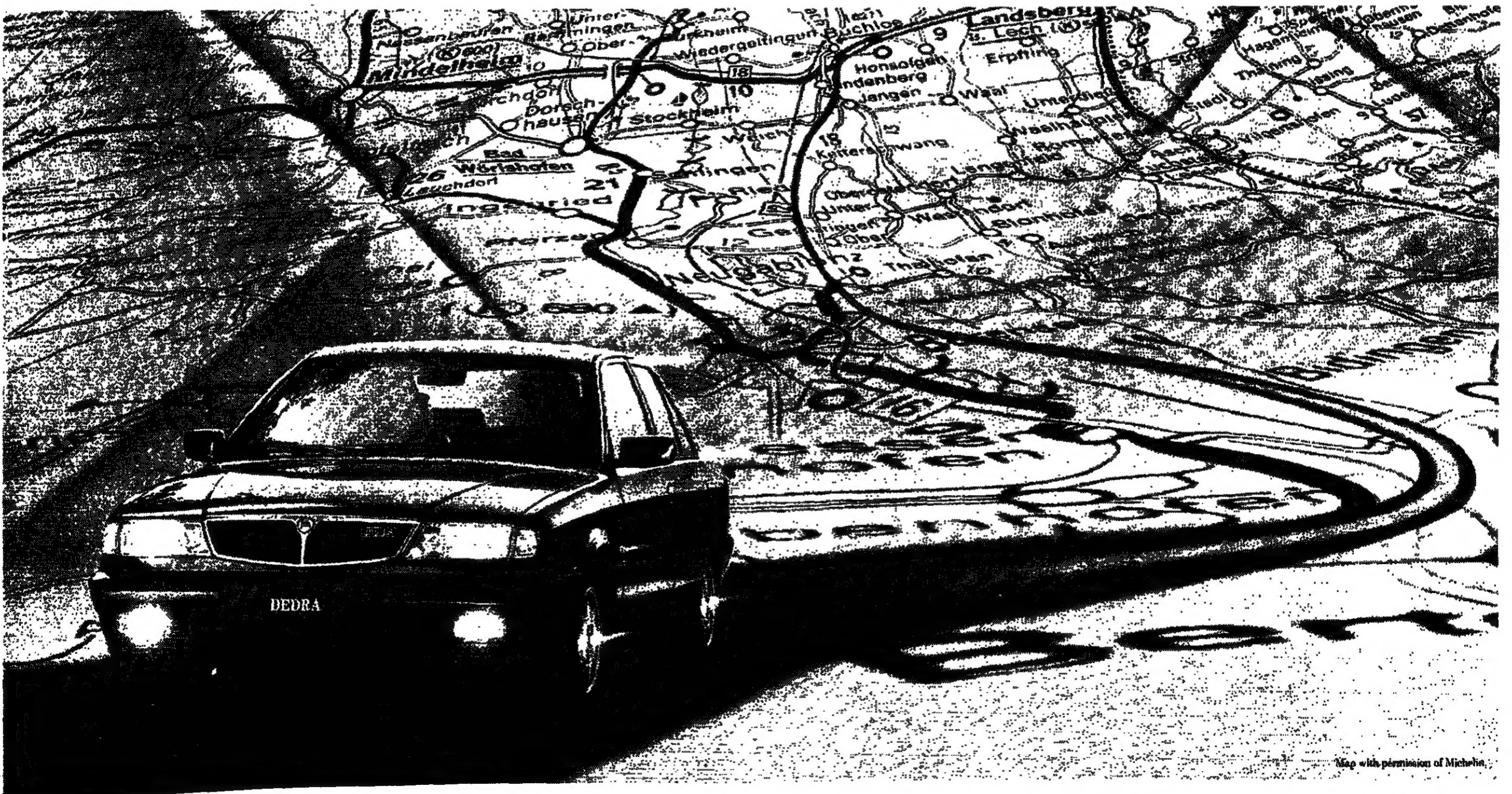
Government business managers are confident that her call for a referendum will be comfortably defeated. But there is more nervousness about debates, expected to be held on July 26, in the Com-

mons and Lords on Maastricht's social chapter.

Mr Bill Cash, the Tory MP and prominent opponent of Maastricht, indicated yesterday he may vote for the social chapter in the hope of it wrecking the treaty legislation.

Government business managers believe many Euro-sceptics will be under pressure from constituency associations not to vote for the social chapter, which most Tories oppose more than the treaty itself.

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WORLD RALLY CHAMPION



DRIVING INSPIRATION

BELGIUM

Monday July 12 1993

Green light likely for
Europe's first eco-tax
Page 3EC capital is flying high
with airport extension
Page 2

As it assumes the presidency of the European Community this month, Belgium is embarked on a course towards a more federalist structure at home. It sees Europe as an anchor for its own political and economic restructuring. **David Gardner reports.**

Euro-devotee calls the tune

IT IS HARD to imagine any European Community country other than Belgium decreeing a reduction in jail sentences for convicted prisoners to mark its assumption this month of the EC's presidency. Idiosyncratic though the gesture seems, it illustrates the importance Belgium attaches to Europe, and to its place in it.

Belgium, always in the vanguard of Euro-federalism and in the throes of settling down to a more federalist structure at home, takes over management of the Community after a year which has seen a backlash against the Maastricht treaty on political, economic and monetary union, in a number of European countries.

It intends to set a new tone, banking on ratification of the treaty in the UK and Germany by around September. Mr Jean-Luc Dehaene, the busy Flemish Christian Democrat who heads Belgium's four-party Centre-Left coalition, repeated in several eve-of-presidency interviews that over the next six months he is setting the EC's compass to go "not a step further than Maastricht, but towards all of Maastricht".

Mr Dehaene, is quite likely to call a special autumn summit after treaty ratification, with Franco-German backing. The intention would be to relaunch the EC: the practical goal would be to agree the rules, management and loca-

tion for the European Monetary Institute. This is the precursor to the European Central Bank envisaged for later this decade under the plans for economic and monetary union (Emu) which lie at the heart of Maastricht. It must be in place by next January to launch the second stage of Emu.

Mr Dehaene and his colleagues remain convinced of the need for Maastricht and the viability of Emu. They are determined to use their presidency to raise the EC flag from political half-mast, where it has scarcely fluttered for the past year, as first the British and then the Danes held the Community presidency.

They see Europe as an anchor for Belgium's own federalism and as offering a pretext for re-ordering its economy, especially to put its public finances right. Mr Dehaene told the Spanish daily, El Pais, recently that Belgium's European and domestic federalisms "are complementary and indissolubly linked". Yet, Belgian politicians often give the impression that they believe their linguistically fragmented country - divided between French-speaking Wallonia, Dutch-speaking Flanders and polyglot Brussels - can only survive as a nation-state within firm supranational structures provided by growing EC integration.

That is "taking it a step too



Symphony of joyful expectations: Foreign Minister Willy Claes, baton in hand, will try to keep the 12 EC member states playing in unison this year (see page three)

far," counters Mr Willy Claes, foreign minister and a Flemish Socialist, but he happily acknowledges that, "we have always been in favour of transfers of national sovereignty towards a supranational body," and that "there is a link going in the other direction".

Under a seven-party deal in May, Belgium devolved national sovereignty downwards to an extent that will make it one of the most completely federalised states in the EC after its next elections. The state will retain control of foreign policy and defence, justice, taxation and social security, but other matters, from the environment to education, and from trade to transport, will be the responsibility of the three regional executives and

their directly elected parliaments.

Securing decisions in Belgium will then become almost as arduous as getting the EC 12 to agree, but, local politicians emphasise, they will have a firm consensus underpinning them, and a comfortable EC umbrella above. It will, moreover, by then have an advisory committee of the regions, an arrangement which Belgium is convinced is the embryo of a "Europe des regions".

That is one reason why widespread predictions in May that Belgium was heading for a Czech/Slovak-style divorce appear alarmist. A provocative statement at the time by Mr Luc Van den Brande, Christian Democrat chief of the Flemish executive, predicted that feder-

alisation would lead to complete autonomy for Flanders within the decade. Recent opinion polls, however, make it clear that only 6 per cent of Belgians, and even only 9 per cent of Flemings, favour separation. The majority backs a federalist solution.

So-called Belgo-Belge scraps between Dutch and French speakers are increasingly less melodramatic, partly because of this, partly because politicians from all parties are deeply unpopular - and want to stave off elections as long as possible - and also because Belgium has moved into recession.

In the view of leading economists, such as Mr Peter Praet of Generale de Banque, the separatist debate has the merit of

focusing attention on Belgium's structural shortcomings, such as its fast-rising social security bill, in both Flanders and Wallonia.

The government is struggling against a serious imbalance in public finances, with a budget deficit of 6.9 per cent last year and a government debt overhang equivalent to nearly 125 per cent of national output. Excluding interest on the debt, the budget is in surplus. The government is poised to stem part of the interest payment haemorrhage by refinancing short-term foreign borrowings into long-term debt denominated in Belgian francs.

That should produce a sizeable reward - perhaps a 1.5 percentage points of gross domestic product saving on the

interest bill - for its three-year old *franc fort* policy of tying the franc to the D-Mark.

Convinced it can reach the 3 per cent of GDP target budget deficit for Emu laid down by Maastricht, Mr Dehaene pushed through a BF710bn tax and cuts package in March, at the cost of the near-collapse of his government. The government also expects BF25bn this year and next from a four-year privatisation drive which is expected to net BF70bn. This will put up for sale assets ranging from the CGER/ASLE banking and insurance group, to Belgacom, the state telecommunications company.

Though Belgium is as much out of step with the Emu criteria as the UK, Italy or Spain, the Belgian franc became a ref-

uge currency, in the currency mayhem of last autumn, and did not have to leave the exchange rate mechanism, the EC's currency grid, or devalue. This was a tribute to the credibility of its monetary policy, and Belgium's perceived status as part of the hard core EC currency zone, encompassing Germany, France and the Benelux countries.

With other partners gaining competitive advantage through devaluation, Belgium has to stay within this hard core, to which it sells three fifths of its exports, but it is failing to bear down on indexed and inflationary wage settlements which are blunting its competitive edge. It has opted instead to use revenue from new taxes on non-industrial fuel users to cut employers' social security payments in the exports sector. This will not be enough, however, to close a widening wage gap with its main partners.

In Belgium, these strains strengthen the attraction of Emu's goal of a single currency, and even of an earlier locking of parties between the hard core countries, once Maastricht is ratified. The latter idea, canvassed by Euro-federalists, is that a *forte en avant* by the stronger economies would establish a target at which weaker partners could aim later.

"I'm in favour of that," says Mr Alfons Verplaetse, the respected governor of Belgium's central bank, "but I don't think it will happen. This recession could be longer than we think."

Mr Praet says locking parties would be dangerous while there was uncertainty about what was going to happen in a year's time in Germany. "When growth resumes, maybe we can try something more audacious," he adds.

But the longer-term goal of full EC monetary union still looks like a haven to Belgium. As Mr Claes expresses it: "When there are monetary changes in Washington we feel it across the European continent. Are we still not ready to face up to the lessons of the monetary instability of last year, which not one member state was able to resist by itself?"

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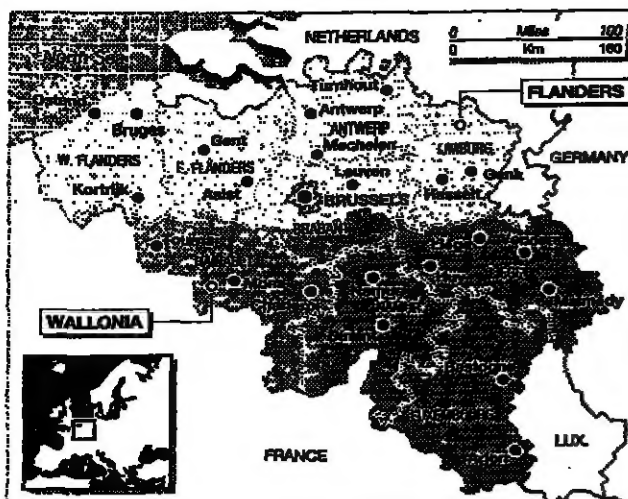
How do you
pronounce
Wallonia?
And how
come it is **big** news?

No matter which way you pronounce it, Wallonia spells out good news for manufacturers. In independent reports, the French-speaking region of Belgium came out as one of the most productive regions in Europe. Even better - the US Department of Labor singled it out as having the highest productivity in terms of cost per unit in 1991. Put it down to an excellent social climate and a well-educated workforce, coupled with the active support of local authorities and an enviable position (the German, French and Dutch borders are all within an hour's drive). Wallonia has come a long way in the past few years - and intends to go even further. No matter how you pronounce it.



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BELGIUM 2



KEY FACTS

Area	30,520 sq km	Population	9.96m (1992 est)
Head of state	King Baudouin	Currency	Belgian franc
Average exchange rate	1991 \$1 = BF64.15		1992 \$1 = BF62.15
ECONOMY			
Total GDP (\$bn)	218.7	Latest*	n.a.
Real GDP growth (%)	0.8		0.0
Consumer prices (% chng pa)	2.4		2.4
Unemployment (% of lab force)	11.3		12.1
Balance of trade (\$bn)	8.93		7.04
Public debt as % of GDP (year end)	121.0		n.a.
Current account balance (\$bn)	4.7		n.a.
Trade balance (\$bn)	-2.5		n.a.
Main trading partners (1992, % by value)		Exports	Imports
Germany	23.0	23.9	
France	19.1	16.3	
Netherlands	13.8	17.4	
EC	75.3	73.6	

*Trade figures refer to Belgium-Luxembourg Economic Union. *1992 figures GDP growth - year on year. Source: CIA, unemployment - June 1993. Source: ILO, World Bank, Eurostat, EU.

BELGIUM'S high productivity and export-oriented economy is suffering from recession among its partners, a sharp downturn at home, and the unsustainable expense of a huge government debt equivalent to about 125 per cent of its national output.

Yet it is also well positioned to reap rewards from its franc fort policy, linking the Belgian franc to the D-Mark. This tie, tenaciously maintained for the past three years, makes the Belgian government even more determined to link up in monetary union with its neighbours, especially after the European currency chaos of last autumn.

From 1988, Belgium enjoyed three years of high, non-inflationary growth, peak private investment and good corporate profitability, along with big increases in disposable income. But the more than 4 per cent of gross domestic product average growth of 1988-90 slowed to 1.9 per cent in 1991 and just 0.8 per cent last year. This year is likely to see a contraction of about 0.7 per cent, and only a slow pick-up of around 1 per cent of GDP is foreseen for 1994.

At home, demand has fallen; new car registrations for the first three months of this year, for instance, were down 19.4 per cent on the same period last year. But this is more due to the general climate of EC-wide recession and rising unemployment. In Belgium, there is no "debt deflation" brake holding back a rise in consumption as there is in the UK and Scandinavia. On the contrary, the size and rate of household and corporate savings is high.

The determining factor in Belgium's recession is the slowdown in its export markets. Its exports are equivalent to about two thirds of its GDP, and nearly two thirds of its sales

Economy hit hard by general EC climate, says David Gardner

Export fall fuels recession

abroad are to its neighbours in Germany, France and the Netherlands, all in recession. In addition, Belgium's relative dependence on what it earns in the international marketplace is far greater than any of these main partners; per capita it exports nearly twice the amount Germany does.

Export success had fuelled high growth, particularly following German reunification. But the extent of German economic contraction has hit Belgium hard. Germany "delayed the recession for Belgium", says Mr Albert Verplaetse, the central bank governor.

The poor outlook for exports has led to annual investment growth coming down from more than 15 per cent three years ago to perhaps minus 2 per cent this year. Company bankruptcies in the first six months this year reached a record 3,079, 35 per cent up on the same period in 1991, when the first signs of a slowdown appeared.

Last year also saw the first volume fall in exports since 1975, and a 1.4 per cent drop in foreign sales at current prices. All this has fed through into lost jobs, with unemployment rising from 9.3 per cent in 1991, to an expected 11.9 per cent this year.

With the franc pegged to the D-Mark, a collateral and dangerous problem has been the higher rate of wage increases in Belgium over the past three years, creating a 4 per cent wage gap with its three main trading partners. Belgium is the last EC coun-

try (aside from Luxembourg with which it has an economic union) to retain automatic wage indexation, leading over the past three years to nominal wage rises nearly twice the rate of inflation, now at around 2.8 per cent. While wage settlements have generally been around or below German levels, the OECD reckons that in 1988-1994, Belgian wages will have risen by 38 per cent, against 30 per cent in France, and 28 per cent in the Netherlands.

"The government has been very slow to recognise that problem," says

next year and in 1995.

The other vital ingredients to retain Belgium's competitive edge are wage moderation and a concerted effort to bring the budget deficit and government debt under control.

Recent signs that wage settlements were easing are already looking ephemeral. Most unions at national level had agreed not to seek real wage increases in 1993-94. But subsequent negotiations at sectoral level have secured rises - after inflation which is automatically added in - of between 1.4 and 3.4 per cent in 14 industries.

Moreover, the higher fuel charges in the Maribel plan will also go into the retail price index and therefore back into wages. The plan may not have as much effect as the authorities foresee in closing the wage gap with Belgium's competitors.

Public finances have also suffered some drift. The Dehaene government is vigorously trying to get the deficit under control, through a mix of new taxes and spending cuts. The near collapse of the government in March over a BF110bn budget-cutting package underlined the political sensitivity of the task.

The turnaround in government finances between 1981 and 1991 was impressive. Spending was cut from 58.6 per cent to 51.7 per cent of GDP, with revenues falling modestly from 45.4 per cent to 45.4 per cent. The deficit was thereby only cut from 13.3 per cent of GDP to 8.3 per cent. The

balance of the budget after interest paid on debt is taken out, however, moved from a deficit of 5.5 per cent to a "surplus" of 4.1 per cent. Nevertheless, the deficit with interest crept up to 6.9 per cent last year - well wide of the 3 per cent target set by the Maastricht treaty for 1996 for member states such as Belgium determined to be in the first wave of European economic and monetary union (Emu).

Yet in the coming months the government can call in short-term debt, and refinance it long term, and in Belgium francs. "I hope we will see in '94 the real reward for the strong franc policy," says Mr Praet, who foresees a saving on the government's interest bill equivalent to 1 to 1.5 per cent of GDP.

If interest rates in Germany, and therefore Belgium, ease down further, Belgium should be on target for a deficit of around 5.3-5.5 per cent of GDP next year.

The authorities have little doubt that they can and must make it into the first wave of Emu. They point out that the franc became a refuge currency during last September's chaos in the exchange rate mechanism of the European Monetary System - with short-term inflows of BF125bn, or 1.7 per cent of GDP.

Speculators, they said, ignored the fact that Belgium's current account has had a surplus of around 2 per cent of GDP since 1985, and that in spite of the deficit in its public finances, it is a net creditor country through its high private savings. The brief rise in domestic interest rates during the March budget cuts and wage indexation crisis was quickly reversed.

In the future, however, the franc could still come under pressure if wage indexation continues to erode Belgian competitiveness.

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Hilary Clarke discusses legislation designed to protect the environment

Green light likely for eco-tax

BELGIUM is set to become the first European country to introduce a green tax to force consumers to switch to products that have a less damaging effect on the environment. The so-called eco-tax, at present being debated in the Belgian upper house, has put the government of Prime Minister Jean-Luc Dehaene at odds with a range of different industries from plastics and chemicals to French mineral water producers. If, as seems likely, the tax is agreed by the senate, it will become operational next year.

The eco-tax was born out of Belgium's constitutional reforms, the bulk of which were agreed last February. To

obtain a necessary two-thirds majority in parliament for its sweeping constitutional changes which will federalise the country, the government needed the support of opposition Flemish Agalev and French-speaking Ecolo parties. The ecologists, who between them have 18 members of parliament, seized the opportunity and said they would back the government's plans only if it agreed to the eco-tax.

Industry claims the eco-tax will put up new barriers to trade and is out of step with environmental legislation designed to cut domestic packaging waste in the European Community. Belgium's trade

unions, which originally backed the tax, have now joined the employers' protest because they fear it could result in huge job losses.

The experimental tax will be applied to a selected group of consumer items including disposable cameras and razors, paper with less than a certain amount of recycled fibre and domestic chemical products such as weed killers, pesticides and glue. Beer and wine bottles, soft drink cans and water bottles will also be taxed a maximum of 15 francs a litre. Batteries and throw-away razors will have a levy of 10 and 20 francs respectively. Leading the battle against

the tax are the plastics and chemicals industries. PVC bottles are the only product which will automatically be taxed the maximum 15 francs a litre in a bid to gradually abolish PVC production altogether. "PVC is the most recycled material in Belgium today. It is clear there is a prima facie discrimination against PVC," said Jean-Marie Chandel, head of corporation communications with Belgium's largest PVC manufacturer, Solvay.

French water manufacturers have joined the Belgian plastic industry in their protest as the majority of plastic-bottled water in Belgium is imported

from France. The French government has lodged an official complaint against the tax with the Belgian authorities. For its part, the plastics industry has complained to the European Commission that the tax discriminates against PVC.

But the tax has also angered a broad range of Belgian industry. "We are not against the principle of imposing a levy on a product to correct damage done to the environment, but we are against an arbitrary and general taxation the proceeds of which will not be used for cleaning up the damage the product has done," said Georges Jacobs, head of the Belgian Industry Federation. Belgium's eco-tax differs from packaging waste schemes already introduced in other EC countries because it will be high enough to change consumer habits and influence distributors' choices in packaging, rather than raising revenue for waste management investment.

Environment has been the responsibility of Belgium's regional governments since 1980. Revenue from the eco-tax will be distributed to the Brussels, Flanders and Walloon authorities who will have control over its spending. The Belgian employers' organisation

Leading the battle against the tax are the plastics and chemical industries

says there is no guarantee that money raised, an estimated BF22.5bn on plastic bottles alone, is used for waste management and environment corrective projects. Doubts have also been raised over how the tax will be collected, although the Greens say the additional administration will be worth it because of the knowledge to be gained on consumer behaviour with regard to the environment.

Following the outcry from industry against the proposals, it was agreed to establish a follow-up commission to examine the impact of the tax, part of a last-minute trade-off between the government and the Greens during their negotiations over the eco-tax. The government-appointed body will have considerable power to modify the law, including waiting until June 1994 before setting final tax levels.

Resigned to the fact that the eco-tax will be introduced in Belgium in some form or other, Belgian packaging users, manufacturers and raw material producers are developing their own alternative packaging waste reduction programme, Foot-Plus, which will be based on Germany's Dual-System scheme. Under the Foot-Plus plans, distributors will pay a levy into a government fund which will be pumped back into industry-run waste management schemes. Industry hopes to persuade the Greens to adopt this system.

Whether the ecologists can be persuaded to do this is uncertain. "An essential element of green thinking is product policy, not just the production process. What's the point of a clean factory that makes polluting products?" asks Agalev member Chris Vermeeren, who helped draft the eco-tax legislation.

Industry's other plan of attack is via the European Community. "We hope the European Commission will at least object to the discriminatory clause against PVC," said Nancy Rusotto of the Association of Plastic Manufacturers in Europe.

Dick Leonard discusses the constitutional reforms

Fashioning federalism

IT TOOK 30 years of campaigning and the painful assembling of a seven-party agreement to obtain the necessary two-thirds majority, but in May the Belgian parliament approved the final steps to turn the country into a federal state. From now on the national government will be confined to carefully delineated powers.

These will be largely restricted to foreign affairs, defence, justice, internal security, taxation and social security. All the remaining responsibilities, including economic affairs, the environment, education, cultural affairs, transport, housing, planning, research, agriculture and foreign trade, will be devolved, or already have been, to three regions (Flanders, Wallonia and Brussels) and three language communities - Dutch, French and German.

It has been a step by step process, starting in 1980 when the regions of Flanders and Wallonia were established. A third self-governing region - for Brussels - was set up in 1987, when education was transferred from the national government to the language communities. The constitutional changes approved in May, which will not take effect until after the next parliamentary elections, are intended to complete the picture.

The changes foreshadow a considerable overhaul of the

national parliament, which until now has been an unwieldy and not very influential body with an almost complete overlap between the powers of the two chambers. Henceforth, the lower house - the Chamber of Representatives - which will be reduced from 212 members to 150, will be the main legislative body.

The Senate, the membership of which drops from 174 to 71, will essentially be a revising chamber. Separate parliaments for Flanders and Wallonia will be directly elected, as the parliament for Brussels has been since 1987. The minister-presidents of the three regions will in future be known as prime ministers. The provinces of Brabant, the only one which has previously been bilingual, will be split into two, leaving Belgium with five French- and five Dutch-speaking provinces.

The main inspirer of the constitutional changes was Wilfried Martens, who was prime minister almost continuously from 1979 to 1992. Yet it fell to his successor, Jean-Luc Dehaene, also a Flemish Christian Democrat, to steer the main changes through parliament, a tricky exercise as his left-centre coalition fell far short of the necessary two-thirds majority in both houses.

He managed to get the measures through by a judicious mixture of stick and carrot. The stick was applied to the four governing parties - two

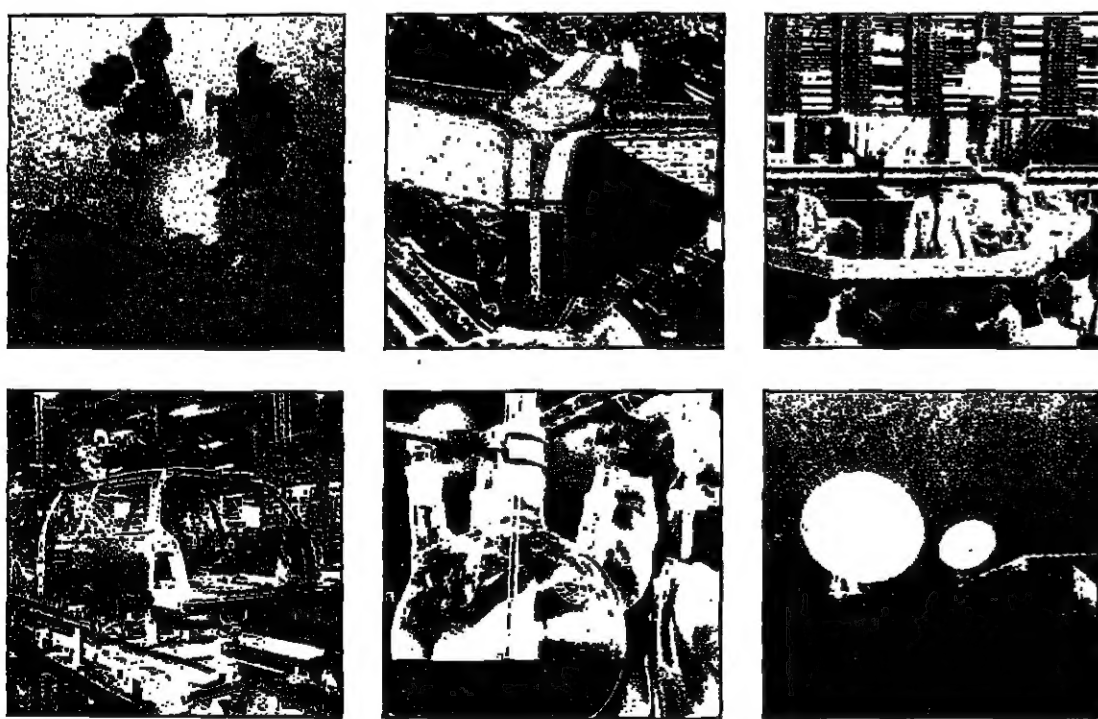
Christian and two Socialist - who were aware of their unpopularity in the country. A government defeat would have precipitated an early general election.

The carrots were offered to three opposition parties, each of whose support was needed. The support of the two Green parties - one for each of the main language groups - was obtained in return for new ecological taxes. The moderate Flemish Nationalists were won over by the introduction of a clause ensuring that residual powers not specifically mentioned in the constitution should revert to the regions.

Will the new changes stick or do they merely mark a stage in a process leading inevitably to separation, as in the case of Czechoslovakia? There are some warning signs, notably the press interview given in May by the Flemish minister-president, Luc Van den Brande. He foreshadowed a much more complete autonomy for Flanders, setting a target date of 2002.

Mr Van den Brande is a member of Dehaene's own party, and his interview, which was applauded by the bulk of the Flemish press, was embarrassing to the government. Yet the excitement soon died down, and a spontaneous march in Brussels a few weeks later, in opposition to separatism, drew a vast crowd.

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David Gardner watches the government tune up for the EC presidency

Symphony of joyful expectations

WILLY CLAES, the Belgian foreign minister, brings a rare skill to his presidency of the European Community's Council of Ministers, which Belgium took over at the beginning of July for six months. He is a conductor of some repute.

He took up his orchestral baton at an eve-of-presidency concert, kicking off the Belgian mandate by conducting a rendition of Beethoven's Ode to Joy, the anthem of the EC. He will no doubt be hoping for its joyful reverberations over the next six months, as he tries to keep the 12 member states in unison at a fractious and difficult time in the community's development.

The Belgians are thoroughgoing federalists, at home and on the larger stage of Europe, where they have always been in the vanguard of the "ever closer union" to which the Maastricht treaty commits the Community. But they take over the EC's rotating management in the wake of two Euro-sceptical presidencies run by the UK and Denmark, which were strongly marked by these countries' difficulties in obtaining national assent to Maastricht. The Belgian presidency's unofficial slogan, reiterated in recent interviews by prime minister Jean-Luc Dehaene, is "nothing more, but nothing less" than the full application of the European Union treaty.

That majority of member states in favour of greater European integration are looking expectantly to Belgium to relaunch the Europe of Maastricht and

propel it towards what have recently seemed ever more distant goals of monetary and political union.

Amid a flurry of pre-presidency surmise on how Belgium would try to fit the EC balance back towards federalism, the government has dismissed suggestions that it will seek an early revision of the strict fiscal and monetary convergence criteria for economic and monetary union (EMU), and flatly denied that it will push for federalist reforms of EC decision-making ahead of the constitutional review foreseen by Maastricht for 1996.

By then, up to four new member states should be inside the EC, if enough Austrians, Swedes, Finns and Norwegians can be persuaded by their governments that this is worthwhile. Most of the crunch points in the negotiations with the applicant countries will be reached on Belgium's watch - and it will be judged in large part on how it handles them.

More streamlined decision-making, implying less room for national vetoes, is seen as the inevitable consequence of the EC enlarging to take in new members. But the present accession negotiations are supposed to get the applicants in by January

1995 - last month's EC summit in Copenhagen decided - with only minor adjustments to EC decision-making.

Mr Claes told the FT it would be "logical, democratic and fair play" to wait until the new members were in before discussing more far-reaching reforms. But he added that the goal of the Community "is not an economic one but a political one. We need an open debate and a sincere debate in Scandinavia and in Austria on

Maastricht: agreement on two to three areas of its Common Foreign and Security Policy, and the embryo of a common stance on immigration and asylum policy as part of the "third pillar" of co-operation in justice and home affairs. "I should think that is more than enough for six months," he says with sobriety but clear relish.

EC federalists have been chastened by the backlash against the Community and the speed of European integration set off

That majority of member states in favour of greater European integration are looking expectantly to Belgium to relaunch the Europe of Maastricht

this target. "Maastricht," he emphasises firmly, "is not an ending point."

But Mr Claes, a Flemish Socialist in Mr Dehaene's Christian Democrat-dominated coalition, says his priorities are to speed up the EC enlargement talks, the fight against recession and unemployment, and implementing the Maastricht treaty, which should become fully ratified - Belgium hopes - by September at the latest. He is seeking to lay modest but solid foundations for the two new "pillars" in

ities and power of a presidency," Mr Claes says. "We know you need consensus to make progress, and that we are just the go-between." But while it is only natural after a year of EC drift for Belgium to discourage high expectations, its presidency faces a series of challenges going beyond its stated priorities.

■ Money. Its first task will be to preside over the share-out of Ecu157bn in EC regional and structural development spending for 1994-99, when all its partners except tiny, rich Luxembourg are unhappy with Commission plans for spending it.

■ Gatt. The Uruguay Round world trade reform talks will come to a head under the Belgian presidency. Belgium will have to contain growing tensions between France and its partners over the EC's stance, at a time when the Belgian government is increasingly sympathetic to the Paris hard line on farm trade. Mr Dehaene called last November's EC-US breakthrough on cutting farm subsidies "a tactical blunder" in a recent interview, saying it had to be "corrected".

■ EC monetary policy. It falls to Belgium to kick-start the second phase of EMU, due to start in January with the creation of the

European Monetary Institute, precursor of the European Central Bank foreseen at the third stage later in the decade. The presidency will have to arbitrate amid continuing tensions arising from high German interest rates. It will also have to resolve the competition to host the EMI/ECB, as part of a complex package locating other EC institutions.

■ Bosnia. The EC's increasingly bad conscience about not doing enough to resolve the Bosnian conflict led Chancellor Helmut Kohl of Germany to champion lifting the arms embargo on ex-Yugoslavia to allow the Bosnian Muslims to defend themselves. At Copenhagen, the EC instead said it would send more troops to defend the Muslim "safe areas". Mr Dehaene has acknowledged that if not enough troops are sent, the embargo issue will come back.

Beyond this lies a minefield of more mainstream EC business and concerns. On the environment, for instance, the Belgian presidency will have to arbitrate in the increasingly ill-tempered row over German waste exports for recycling, partly by pushing hard to get the stalled EC directive on packaging waste through. Having introduced its own eco-taxes (green tax) Belgium is also committed to the planned EC energy tax to combat global warming. But Britain is flatly opposed to this.

The Belgians will be scrutinised closely, too, to see how well they conform to the EC's new pledge to be more open in its decision-making.

Andrew Hill looks at plans to modernise Brussels' airport

Capital of EC is flying high

BRUSSELS has a state-of-the-art airport. Unfortunately for the thousands of businesspeople and politicians who use it, the art is late-1950s.

Between 1955, when the terminal buildings were built for the World's Fair, and 1958, no substantial work was done on the site, apart from the construction of a small satellite terminal in the late 1970s. But over the same period the city of Brussels has become the institutional capital of the European Community and a magnet for international business travellers and politicians. For these customers - who represent two-thirds of the 9m or so passengers using the airport annually - the 1958 terminal is a disappointment: cramped, shabby, and slow.

Perhaps Brussels airport's only advantage over its com-

petitors is its proximity to the city centre. It can take only 15 minutes to travel by car from central Brussels to the north-eastern suburb of Zaventem where the airport is built - but that is more a geographical stroke of luck than a triumph of airport management, and it is let down by an out-of-date "City Express" train link.

Professor Pierre Klees, chief operating officer of the Brussels Airport Terminal Company since January, admits that the airport's owners - a combination of the Belgian state and private investors, including the country's largest holding companies - should have done more to keep the principal airport of the self-styled capital of Europe up to date.

Now, at last, the long-awaited improvements are

being carried out. From the window of Mr Klees's office, the finger of a long, new pier points out towards the runways. Once complete, the extensions should allow Brussels to handle an extra 21m passengers a year - more than tripling the present capacity of 8.3m, to take account of estimated passenger growth forecasts of between 4 and 7 per cent a year.

Posters on the approach road to the airport proclaim a completion date of 1993. In fact, following wrangles with contractors, consultants, the government and the airlines, BATC is now estimating the new terminal, with 23 additional gates, will be open some time in the second half of 1994. The company says it will set a formal completion date in September.

The building of the new pier - to be followed, eventually, by a second parallel pier linked by a tunnel - is the most obvious element of the work under way, and the one which is creating the most headaches for users of the airport. But BATC is simultaneously hoping to improve the efficiency of the existing terminal, so that when the wings come off the new buildings next year, the entire system will be quicker and easier to use. Automatic signalling systems will guide drivers to spaces in the airport's car parks, for example; a new integrated computer network, linking all airport services in collaboration with the airlines, should speed check-in, border and security controls; and BATC is also trying to persuade Belgian railways to upgrade the airport's rail links with Brussels and Antwerp.

The improvements do not come cheap. BATC announced a net consolidated profit of BF283m in 1991, after tax, but it has had to raise BF212m, several billion francs more than the original estimates for the improvements, through a bond issue, to cover the cost of the new work.

Further cash will be needed to bring the new airport into line with the requirements of the Schengen free-travel agreement, which plans to abolish passport checks for travellers between nine continental EC

The extensions should mean an extra 21m passengers a year

countries from December 1. BATC will be given longer to carry out the work necessary to segregate intra-European passengers from international passengers, but Professor Klees still estimates the cost at some BF1m.

Despite that, he says there is no way that the airport will rest on its laurels once the improvements have been made. "It's very damaging that we didn't start work like Schiphol [Amsterdam's airport] or Paris 20 years ago. I think all airports should have work in progress every day," he says.

The airport's managers are still cautious about what the future holds. In March, Mr Eric Kirsch, chairman of BATC and chief executive of the state authority which owns 48 per cent of the group's shares, said that the analysis of trends in aircraft movements, passenger and freight traffic in 1992 gave reason for "moderate but definite optimism".

But he also pointed out that Brussels was just one of a cluster of highly competitive airports, all attempting to be the hub of international and intra-European aircraft operations.

Brussels airport is certain to retain its head start over competitors as the only airport serving the EC institutions, not to mention Nato and a host of multinational company headquarters sited around Brussels. But an improvement in Europe's high-speed rail network could draw passengers to other modes of transport, and even entice them to use other hub airports as a way into Europe. That would increase the pressure on the new terminal, and could chip away at BATC's income, based on retail operations (40 per cent), airport taxes and charges for use of pier facilities (60 per cent).

Eurotunnel, operator of the Channel tunnel, claims a combination of high-speed train and tunnel will reduce the journey between Brussels and central London to three and a quarter hours, possibly making the train an attractive alternative to flying for some travellers.

Profile: GUY SPITAELS

Mr Wallonia pulls the strings

GUY SPITAELS, who led the French-speaking Socialist Party (PS) for 10 years until early last year, can claim to be the most successful leader the party has ever had. He rescued it from a seven-year spell in opposition, and in 1987 boosted its share of the vote in Wallonia to 44 per cent, the highest proportion of any Socialist Party in the EC, as he was quick to point out to any inquirers.

Along the way, he had effectively absorbed the predominantly left-wing separatist Rassemblement Wallon and eliminated the Belgian Communist Party as a parliamentary force, in spite of its very moderate programme. His reward was to be asked to form a government by King Baudouin after the 1987 election, from which his party had emerged as the dominant force, not only in Wallonia but in the national parliament.

It did not take Mr Spitaels long to discover that the Flemish parties would not accept him as prime minister. The ostensible reason was that he could not speak fluent Dutch. Yet Mr Spitaels does not believe that this was the whole story. "Even if I had spoken perfect Dutch," he says, "it would have made no difference. It is not the fact of not being able to speak their language that the Flemish object to, it is that, as the majority group, they feel the job belongs to them."

He is probably right. Each of the last 11 governments has been led by a Fleming, and the few post-war administrations led by French-speakers have been short-lived. Mr Spitaels settled for being the country's chief power broker, staying outside the government as leader of the PS, but being consulted by the then prime minister, Wilfried Martens, on important points. He also chose and effectively controlled the Socialist-led coalition that ruled the Walloon and Brussels regions and the executive of the French-speaking community.

Mr Spitaels, 61, had a strict Catholic upbringing, but lost his faith while studying law and political science at the Catholic University of Louvain. He subsequently became a professor at Brussels University. He joined the PS at the age of 28 and became a full-time politician at 42.

There was general astonishment when, shortly after the last general election, he effectively appointed himself as minister-president of Wallonia. It was, he later said, a move he had long pondered. After 10 years of pulling the strings from outside government it was time, he felt, to assume direct executive authority. Although at an earlier period he had been a vice-premier and budget and communications minister, it was a sign of the times that he should choose to head a regional administration rather than join-



Guy Spitaels: opted to be Mr Wallonia

ing the national government. In the region, as earlier in his party, his easy dominance is universally acknowledged. His intellectual power and shrewd political judgment gave him a head-start over all possible rivals. The Flemish parties have publicly lamented that they could find nobody of comparable stature to head the Flemish regional government.

Wallonia is the poorest of the three Belgian regions, but its standard of living is more than 90 per cent of the EC average, and it did not qualify for special assistance from the community. Mr Spitaels' proudest achievement so far has been to squeeze funds out of the EC for the poorest of Wallonia's five provinces, Malmout. Mr Spitaels may never have quite made it as Mr Belgium, but nobody now disputes his status as Mr Wallonia.

Dick Leonard

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★ Highly qualified, motivated and productive work force

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★ One of the lowest inflation rates in Europe and the industrialised world

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MANAGEMENT

IN A business where brands are a company's most cherished assets, abolishing the post of brand manager may not seem a brilliant idea. Yet last October, Elida Gibbs, the UK personal products subsidiary of the Anglo-Dutch Unilever group, did just that. For good measure, it scrapped its sales department, too.

Instead, the company's brands - which include Fabergé Brut, Pears, Signal and Timotei - are now the responsibility of a new breed of executives known as brand development managers, while the former sales team has been re-born as the "customer development process".

The title changes are far more than cosmetic. Behind them lies a drive to shake up traditional methods which have radically transformed the way Elida Gibbs operates, from research laboratory to supermarket shelf. It is, in effect, though not in name, a thorough "re-engineering" exercise.

Tony Burgmans, director of Unilever's worldwide personal products business, compares the upheaval with the recent revolution in organisation and working practices which Japanese competition has forced on western industries such as cars.

In common with many manufacturers in these sectors, Elida Gibbs has eagerly embraced concepts such as teamwork, empowerment and total quality. But unlike them, it has been unable to find inspiration from other companies in the same business.

The experience has turned it into a testbed for new techniques within the Unilever group.

The most potent external force for change was not competition from Japan, but pressure from Britain's

"The changes would have been impossible to implement without training - it opened people's minds"

big retailers, through which most of Elida Gibbs' products are sold. By the late 1980s, several felt the company, though still UK market leader, was failing to keep up with the times.

"Two or three years ago, Elida Gibbs' delivery standards were dire and their ordering systems archaic," says Michael Rosen, director of non-foods at J. Sainsbury, Britain's biggest supermarket group. "The whole thing was shameful. They were nearing the point of losing a lot of business." Now, he says, the company is one of Sains-

bury's most efficient suppliers. The route to recovery began on the factory floor. With backing from Mike Perry, Burgmans' predecessor and now joint chairman of Unilever, Elida Gibbs introduced team-working at its plant at Searcroft, near Leeds in 1988.

A clean break with tradition

Responsibility for each production line has been transferred to those working on it, who are encouraged to co-operate continuously to solve problems and improve efficiency. They are also given fuller information about the company's performance and overall strategy.

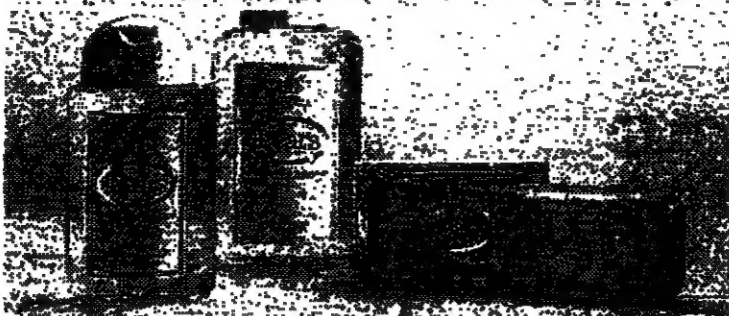
Initially, the switch faced scepticism from trades union officials and older middle managers. To win acceptance, the company put its 1,000 employees through three-day courses on total quality, run by teachers selected from the workforce. "The changes would have been absolutely impossible to implement without training - it opened people's minds," says Jon Riches, personal director, who has overseen an increase in the company's training budget from 0.5 per cent to 1.3 per cent of sales since the late 1980s. This year, he aims to give every employee 10 days' training.

The new approach has produced some big gains. In the past three years, change-over time on one production line has been reduced to less than four hours, from a day and a half, while annual lost-time accidents at Searcroft have been cut by three quarters.

In parallel, a drive to improve customer service has increased from 72 per cent to more than 90 per cent the proportion of orders correctly completed. In the past year, "right first time" performance at the plant has risen six percentage points to more than 90 per cent. The bottom line has benefited, too. Between 1989 and 1991, pre-tax profits rose by 73 per cent and margins widened from 6.5 per cent to 10 per cent. Though recession checked the improvement last year, sales grew by 9 per cent. (see table).

But as experience with the new approach grew, managers became

Elida Gibbs includes Chasechough-Pond's UK



Turnover (£m)

Pre-tax profits (£m)

1989 90 91 1992

Chasechough-Pond's UK

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aware it needed to go still further. They realised that efforts to boost production efficiency were tackling only one link in a chain which connected every part of the business.

One result was a new policy towards suppliers. In three years, their numbers have been cut by more than a third and they have been given more responsibility for quality control, testing and development. But, the biggest breakthrough has been the recognition that the traditional division of the company into separate functions, such as research or distribution, had become a serious handicap. By compartmentalising management, it was frustrating efforts to speed up innovation and increase flexibility.

To enable them to concentrate on

the longer-term business of building brands, many of the day-to-day dealings with retailers which absorbed much of the former brand managers' time have been entrusted to the customer development managers. Their priority is to satisfy growing demands from large retailers that suppliers work with them to increase the sales and profits of entire product categories, rather than just push their own brands.

The teams are said already to have broken down barriers and encouraged wider participation across the company. Burgmans says group decision-making has reached the point where "you often don't know who made a suggestion first".

In April, Elida Gibbs launched the first product of the new system. An aerosol deodorant - named Brut Aquatonic - was developed in less than six months, half as long as would have been needed previously. Burgmans reckons the development time today could be as little as three months. But he stresses the biggest advantage of the reorganisation is that it enables the company to undertake more ambitious projects, rather than just to keep doing the same things more quickly.

Top managers should get a more precise picture of how the reorganisation is working when they review it this week. But the real test of its success will lie in the market - and in the reaction of retailers.

Boots, Britain's largest chemists' chain, says Elida Gibbs now takes a more co-operative attitude towards developing new product markets. "We have a much more satisfactory dialogue than in the past. They now recognise that retailers are far closer to the consumer than they can possibly be."

Sainsbury's Michael Rosen praises Elida Gibbs for "great strides" to improve distribution and service, but says its sales are still spread across too many brands, some of which - such as Pears - it has failed to develop fully.

Ganser at least partly accepts the criticism, saying he plans to focus more support behind fewer brands in future.

But the challenges go beyond the UK. As Unilever integrates its European operations, Elida Gibbs will need to work more closely with sister companies on the continent. It already has Europe-wide responsibility for developing deodorants and a growing share of production is for other European markets.

Not surprisingly, Elida Gibbs' managers are keeping an open mind about the results of the reorganisation. Says Riches: "Ask us again at the end of next year. It is still too early to say we have got it right."

Previous articles in the series have appeared on May 24, June 2, 11, 12, 24 and July 5.

Spot the tricks of the trade

It pays to be wary of consultants, says Christopher Lorenz

Have you ever employed a consultant who turned out to be an organ grinder, a Swiss cheese, or a Mercedes? Did he or she "take it", use perpetual motion, indulge in role reversal, or employ the "CIA approach"? You may not know it - even less admit it - but you have almost certainly suffered at the hands of at least one of these phenomena. For they are all variants of the tricks which management consultants have pulled on their clients from time to time.

This information comes courtesy of an insider, Michael Grunberg, managing director of Stoy Hayward Consulting, a medium-sized British firm. Though one of the slickest talkers around, Grunberg denies that he or his firm use such tricks of the trade. But he is not ignorant of them.

At a meeting last month of the Strand Group, an informal association of in-house consultants for large companies in the UK, Grunberg was invited to give an external perspective of the way consultancy work is bought and used. In an otherwise serious presentation about the ways in which different consultancies operate, he threw in two slides which listed "the stunts they pull" (with the emphasis on the "they"). To distance Stoy Hayward further from such practices, he omitted its logo from the slides.

The first list covered the "sales cycle" (selling to clients), and described 13 types of misbehaviour. First came the "organ grinder" - where the team which does the selling is far more high-powered than the one which actually carries out the assignment. As most clients would confirm, this is far from uncommon.

Then there is "smoke and mirrors": a consultancy claims that its proposed approach, or course of action, is "structured, sophisticated and proven", but in fact it has yet to be tested.

Next come "gold-plating" (a methodology or activity which is not essential), and the "trojan

horse": a low-cost exercise calculated to "front-end" further work out of the client. Both are more widespread than Grunberg implied.

Leaping a bevy of other intriguing practices, from "surgical bypass" to "barrow boy", one arrives at the Mercedes stunt, where the client receives only the basic model and everything else is extra. In the Swiss cheese, consultants leave deliberate gaps in the work they tender, in order to "facilitate extensions" from the client, as Grunberg put it.

Turning to tricks used when a consultant has bid successfully - by whatever means - and is executing an assignment, Grunberg defined "faking it" as relying on the client's inexperience and lack of knowledge; "perpetual motion" as staying on forever; role reversal as taking on the job at the client's expense (which is far from uncommon); and the "CIA approach" as Consulting in Absentia - sub-contracting the work to others in covert fashion.

Then there's "hidden talent" (the exaggeration of per diem work); "car service" (the allocation of general overheads as job-specific expenses); and "carbon copy" - using previous client work without adjusting it. This is one of the most regular (mis)practices of all, too many clients have learned to their cost.

Grunberg concluded with a list of tips to clients on how to avoid being taken to the cleaners in these and other ways. They included: know what you want to achieve; write it down; identify the real experts; read their tenders very carefully; evaluate formally and on a range of criteria; and treat consultants as consultants, not "terrorists" and negotiate with them, "especially on the detail of the deliverables". Above all, "manage the consultancy" and measure its success.

Grunberg was too polite to say so, but all that is easier said than done. You may even need a consultant to advise you how to do it.

PEOPLE

Meehan moves to Mothercare

Mothercare, the children's and babywear retailer that is part of the Storehouse group, is replacing its finance director.

Mothercare says Paul Ryan, finance director since joining from Budgens, the supermarket chain, in 1989, has resigned from the group to pursue other interests nearer to his Leicestershire home.

His replacement is Andrew Meehan, 38, who joins from Sears, where he has been

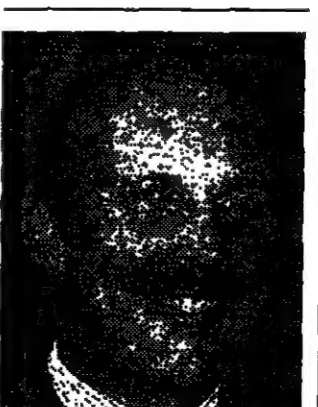
finance director of the sports and leisurewear division. Meehan trained as an accountant with Coopers & Lybrand and spent time at Chase Manhattan and Air Products before joining the Burton Group, where he held senior financial posts in the Top Man, Principles and Burtons chains. He joined Sears in 1987 and was finance director of Selfridges department store before moving to sports and

leisurewear. Mothercare's performance has already started to improve thanks to the reform programme begun by former Storehouse chief executive David Dworkin, and being continued by his appointee Ann Iverson, Mothercare's chief executive, but the programme is less advanced than that at sister chain BHS. Meehan is expected to work closely with Iverson on strategic planning.



Mike Jones, 49, who steps down as chief executive of the Association of British Insurers on August 10, has been appointed to a newly created post of head of corporate affairs at Sun Alliance, the composite insurance company.

Jones, who has worked for insurance trade associations for 25 years, decided to leave the ABI some months ago after it was announced that Mark Boleat, the director-general of the Building Societies Association, was being brought in above Jones' head to be the ABI's first director-general.



The appointment comes after Coppel decided that the UK part of the business should be run as a separate company, rather than directed from group headquarters. The UK business, whose shares were suspended last March, is in urgent need of new financial and management controls, Coppel says.

Maiden, 43, was finance director of Hilton UK for three years and before that finance director at Threshers, the drinks retailer.

CONSTRUCTION CONTRACTS

Hozelock plant for Birmingham

HOZELOCK has announced plans for a factory in Birmingham.

Work on the 10 acre site is due to start in August and the new manufacturing facility - representing an investment of £8.5m - is expected to be operational by the autumn of 1994.

It will house all the manufacturing and assembly lines for Hozelock's ranges of watering equipment, sprayers, garden electrical and housewares products.

The new plant is expected to provide for the planned expansion of the company into the 21st century. Some 65 new jobs will be created, increasing

Hozelock's Birmingham workforce to 550.

The single-storey building will initially afford 175,000 sq ft of factory space and has been designed to facilitate easy expansion up to 335,000 sq ft and for the addition of a mezzanine floor.

"This is a major undertaking which will ensure that we have the facility to increase our manufacturing capacity to support the company's planned growth both in the UK and, particularly, the rest of Europe," said managing director, David Coddling.

Situated at Birmingham's showpiece industrial estate,

Midpoint Park on the A39 trunk road five miles to the north-east of the city, the new factory is also sited for easy access from the M6 and M42 motorways.

It is also less than a mile from Hozelock's computerised national distribution centre at Minworth which will further speed deliveries of finished products to the retail trade.

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GWR boosts its board

Great Western Resources, the UK-quoted oil, gas and coal company which last year suffered an unwelcome torrent of publicity over its flamboyant former chairman Dan Pena, has named two non-executive directors to its already 10-strong board. Donald Clayton and Joseph Reid will be among a team of eight non-executive and four executive directors.

Howard Wolf, the company doctor who replaced Pena as chairman in 1991 following a shareholder rebellion, says the appointments mark GWR's move from "the whisky and society columns to the business pages".

Clayton, 56, is better known to observers as the driving force behind the development of Meridian Oil, owned by Bur-

lington Resources of the US, since 1987. In February, Wall Street was taken aback by Clayton's abrupt and unexpected departure from Burlington, just eight months after being promoted to president of Meridian's parent company.

Reid, an oil and gas consultant in his early 60s, was Clayton's predecessor as chief executive of Meridian Oil. He was also president and chief executive of the natural gas company Superior Oil, taken over by Mobil Oil in 1984.

GWR, which had been in dispute with one of its largest customers, recently came out of Chapter 11, a form of protection from creditors supervised by the courts. The group reported an interim loss of \$2.03m in May, against \$13.6m the previous year.

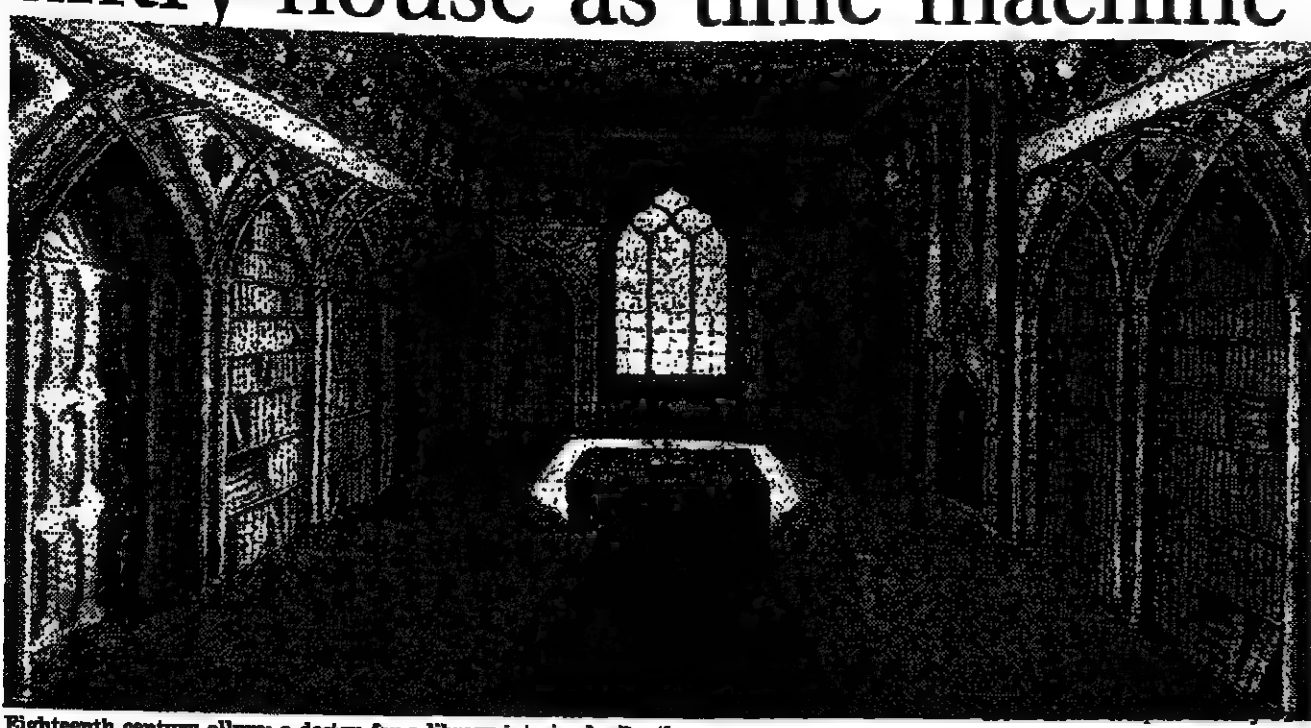
Architecture/Colin Amery

The country house as time machine

This is the time of year for the country house visit. International tourists and eager National Trust members are paying to glimpse the especially English ensemble of the great house with its collections and grounds. Throughout the land a quiet procession threads its way through silent rooms - carefully keeping on the right side of the ropes and speaking in awed whispers. How much do we really see on the country house tour, and how much do we really understand about what is spread before us?

The great moment aesthetically in the English house is the eighteenth century. To assist us with the understanding of this period a valuable new book has been published: *Eighteenth Century Decoration: Design and the Domestic Interior in England* by Charles Saumarez Smith, (Weidenfeld and Nicolson, £50). It is the latest volume in the very comprehensive series that looks at the way interiors are depicted, by collecting together as much contemporary illustrative material as possible. In the case of the eighteenth century there are plenty of architectural drawings, pattern books, paintings and prints that do, when they are analysed, present a clear picture of life indoors at the time. A careful reading of Mr Saumarez Smith's book will open the eyes of visitors to country houses and give them a head start in understanding why the rooms look the way they do and how they were designed for use.

There is relatively little published in this country that is serious on the subject of historic interior decoration. Mr Peter Thornton has done a lot to rectify this and his pioneering book on the seventeenth century interior in England and Holland set a very high standard. He went on to write the badly titled but rewarding book, *Authentic Decor* which updates to an extent the work



Eighteenth century allures: a design for a library interior by Bentley

of the master, Mario Praz, who gave us the gospel of interior decoration and its history. Anyone writing about interior design in England has to match the work of John Fowler and John Cornforth who published the key work in 1974 - *English Decoration in the eighteenth century*. Peter Thornton and John Cornforth have tried hard to show that our aesthetic response to eighteenth century rooms may well be a response that is conditioned by the current look of rooms and houses that were all substantially reorganised in 1910.

The author of this important new book uses as his visual sources, paintings, prints and architects' drawings. The book is a rich visual feast but one of those books where the reader is really helped by being taken by the hand by the author and gently guided into new ways of interpreting old visual sources.

When Mr Saumarez Smith is confronted by a painting by Zoffany or one of Arthur Devis's wooden compositions, he helps us to see them as documentary sources that reveal a lot about the look of the period. They also reveal a set of social relationships that need to be carefully interpreted.

The author must have found it difficult to select from the quantity of material that exists for the period. He has brilliantly found a great deal of unpublished material, and his commentary also reveals hidden elements in familiar images. He is right to comment upon the growth in importance of the spread of possessions amongst all classes as the eighteenth century progressed. The developing range of manufactured products enabled a wide range of people to see their immediate surroundings as expressions of themselves. The

fine arts express this to a degree - especially architecture which began to organise domestic interiors in terms of display.

One of the best sections of this enthralling book for me was the one devoted to the impact of the great architect Robert Adam. Adam's career defines the second half of the eighteenth century. He went on the Grand Tour in the 1750s and met the influential Charles-Louis Clérisseau in Florence from whom he learned how to study the antique and how to draw. This book shows us some of the perfect results of this study at Kedleston, Syon, Kenwood and Home House. Adam understood the complete nature of a room - how to design walls, floor and ceiling as well as the furniture. Johann Zoffany as a leading artist and contemporary of Adam also understood the total domestic realm in his

paintings and the examples shown here reveal not just family life but also the totality of the design of rooms and furniture.

The role of the craftsman and the pattern books of the period is clearly explored in a way that rightly emphasises the importance of the skilled artisan and demonstrates how printed books and engravings helped the spread of stylistic knowledge from France and Italy to London, and from London to the provinces.

Above all this book took me into a world of refinement and taste leavened by satire and the perceptions of Hogarth. I felt by the end that I had lived briefly in the eighteenth century. I admired Mr Saumarez Smith's learning and visual sense and I coveted the architectural wallpaper shown in an interior of 1780 to the extent that I might well consider copying it.

Theatre/Andrew St George

Rope ensures a reputation

Few plays now can afford an actor the chance to say "You swine, you filthy swine" without causing a ripple of mirth in the theatre. But those closing lines of Patrick Hamilton's taut psychological thriller, *Rope*, ring like a tocsin round the Minerva Theatre, Chichester, where Keith Baxter has successfully revived the 1929 classic.

Rope shows how two Oxford undergraduates, Brandon and Granillo, murder their friend Ronald. They conceal the body in a chest, and invite Ronald's father, a stout and assorted friends to dine off the same chest. But one of the guests, a laudable poet called Rupert Cadell, discovers their perfect and motiveless crime.

Stage time and theatre time are identical. After two hours, the dinner service is cleared, and the questions from Rupert become more probing. Before Brandon and Granillo can make off with the body, Rupert returns, confronts them, and wrings a confession.

Hamilton's writing is everywhere detailed, the stage directions punctilious: "He responds vaguely, as one who has only half understood". Yet it is also powerful, making psychological sense of the "foul, lewd and

infamous jest", fashioning a drama of Jacobean scope and Jonsonian bravado. The play moves the thriller genre into drama, but does so by avoiding the whodunnit formula.

The direction (Keith Baxter) serves the purpose exactly. Each time new information arrives, the situation and the characters change. The opening, completely dark except for the two actors' glowing cigarettes which identify them, is all tension and uncertainty: "Do you think we'll get away with it?" The dinner-party performance which follows manages to maintain the sense that Brandon and Granillo are both acting and reacting as circumstances change. The action sprawls over the false-perspective set, a thunder storm worrying at the murderer's throat.

The acting of the three principals keeps pace with the subtleties of Hamilton's plot. Brandon (John Barrowman) differentiates himself neatly from the less expansive and much surlier Granillo (Alexa Denison). Throughout the play, both indulge the thrill of a healthy crime and the spryness of its execution. Both characters drink heavily, and at times stagger round the stage like bleary bachelors at a

stag party. But their interchanges have an excitement and breathlessness born naturally out of their situation.

Rupert (Anthony Head) is all fastidiousness and frolic, a cultured creature already world-weary and bored, but witty enough to know it: "Of course I honour my parents. I send them a telegram of congratulations each year on my birthday." Whether the killers will hang depends on his attitude, a kind of late nineteenth-century decadence which finds its own moral standards when pressed. Head has the character down, fiddling at a cigarette, twitting at his cloak.

Elsewhere Simon Chadwick and Debra Beaumont are perfect as the hoary guests, while Richard Warwick adds commendable weight as the victim's father, Sir Johnstone Kentley.

Hitchcock adapted Hamilton's play in 1948, and it has remained a classic for exactly the reasons which mark its success here: it is, like Hamilton's other plays, tense, uneasy and psychologically acute. Hamilton died at 58 in 1982. His neglected fame should hang on more than just *Rope*.

Minerva Theatre, Chichester, until 7 August

New York/Karen Fricker

Fool Moon

Fool Moon is one of the most aggressively insubstantial productions to open on Broadway recently. It consists of its two multitalented performers, David Shiner and Bill Irwin, goofing around for two hilarious hours, backed by the lively 5-piece urban hillbilly band the Red Clay Ramblers.

Irwin, the personality familiar from his tv, film and stage appearances, is in good-hearted, rubber-bodied form; Shiner, the gangly clown from Cirque du Soleil's Nouvelle Experience, dominates the evening and is its revelation.

In the spirit of classic vaudeville, there's no semblance of a traditional plot linking the bits that Shiner and Irwin play out alone and with each other, the band, and the audience. What almost holds the show together - are the personae the performers adopt, which signal to the audience that we are in a clown-land.

Irwin's persona is sweet-faced and bemused, the innocent victim of external forces, like the weird magnetic pull always threatening to suck him offstage, and the unseen prankster who yanks the cord every time Irwin tries to speak into a microphone (neither performer utters a word during the show).

Shiner spends most of his

time poking fun at audience members. He climbs over rows of seats to find the marauder in "his" chair, borrows someone's camera and then destroys it (not really) and in the evening's funniest segment, brings people on stage to help him pretend-make a silent movie.

If *Fool Moon* is "about" anything, it's how willing people are to follow Shiner's charismatic lead. Everyone mimes, understanding instantly that his is a silent world; New Yorkers never seen without bands on their pocketbooks surrender fur coats and wallets to him; reticent folks end up rolling around the stage in a passionate mock embrace. Watching others abandon inhibition is a guilty pleasure.

While *Fool Moon*'s lack of structure leads it to a wonderful freshness and simplicity, the show does feel slightly underconceived and underheated. Perhaps an outside eye - no director or writer are credited in the programme, so presumably Shiner and Irwin filled all creative roles themselves - could have given the show the edge that it needed to become something more than the charming diversion it is now.

Richard Rogers Theatre, Broadway

Cheltenham Festival/Andrew Clements

Miller's Secret Marriage

The Secret Marriage is the well-made 18th-century opera par excellence, which established its own niche in operatic history from the very start when it was encored in its entirety at its first performance. There may be nothing remarkable in Cimarosa's music, especially for a work six years' younger than *The Marriage of Figaro*, or intricate about the development of the plot. But set up its comic mechanism convincingly and the two acts unwind with a succession of surefire jokes and persistent good humour.

Opera North's new production, put before the public for the first time at Cheltenham last Thursday, applies effective enough lubricant to that comic clockwork. The staging is Jonathan Miller's, and marks the beginning of his rehabilitation in British operatic life after more than five years of self-imposed exile since he directed *Candida* for Scottish Opera in 1988. After Cheltenham the show repairs to the Buxton Festival, where it will form one

element in a Miller package alongside his production of Donizetti's *Maria Stuarda* that opened in Monte Carlo earlier in the year.

With designs by John Conklin (a tastefully marbled, duck-egg blue interior) and purposeful conducting by Roy Laughlin this *Secret Marriage* makes a pleasant, likeable show.

The concept is straightforward enough; the action is transplanted from 18th-century Bologna back to Regency England, to the world in which Colman and Garrick set the play from which Cimarosa's libretto was taken.

The opera is sung in very clearly comprehensible English (a new plain translation by Simon Ross, not without some seemingly unintentional double entendres). Geronimo takes on a Yorkshire accent you could cut with a knife a self-made man from the burgeoning industrial age if ever you saw one and Count Robinson becomes another dim example of the English aristocracy, doubtlessly inbred. It's a sensu-

ble, untroubling piece of theatre, carefully worked out by Miller and perky rendered by his cast.

Andrew Shore's Geronimo is the latest of his portrayals of bourgeois bumptiousness, a bumbling cousin to his Don Pasquale; he handles the accent splendidly, times his entrances and exits perfectly, delivers all his gags with perfect deadpan. He's well matched against Jonathan Best's guileless Robinson and Tamsin Dives' bustling Fidalma.

The young people are spiritedly taken. The Elisetta, the American Kate Egan, was making her British debut; she sings cleanly and cultivates a good mode of visible disdain. Anne Dawson is a wholesome, perky Carolina and Mark Curtis a diligent Paolino. All of them are stylish, attentive performers; the pace is never allowed to falter.

Everyman Theatre, Cheltenham; sponsored by Cray Research (UK) Ltd

Theatre/Malcolm Rutherford

Dubious voice of Satan



Denys Hawthorne and Sean Murray in The Terrible Voice of Satan

Not everything at the Royal Court is wonderful. While David Mamet's *Oleanna* is playing to packed audiences in the main house, a much more dubious production, though also well-attended, is taking place in the Theatre Upstairs. Gregory Motton's *The Terrible Voice of Satan* is an example of a talented playwright losing his way, and it can't help thinking that it was the Royal Court influence that led him beyond temptation.

Motton was a specialist in the obscure to begin with, as anyone who saw the recent revival of his *A Message for the Broken Hearted* at the Battersea Arts will testify. He can write beautifully, but it is not always clear what he means nor who or even where his characters are. By the standards of *The Terrible Voice*, *A Message* was a model of clarity. The new play is all over the place, including under the Irish Sea.

The Court must have some responsibility. Most of its best

productions in the last year or two have been either Irish or American. Yet it can be dangerous to point indigenous playwrights in foreign directions.

The Court sent the once promising Martin Crimp to New York to learn about America. He then wrote *The Treatment*, which showed not a hint of American subtleties or the American talent for self-parody. In *The Terrible Voice* Motton has gone very Irish, but to no great avail.

Irishness apart, the main literary influences on the piece seem to be Marlowe's *Dr Faustus* and, even more blatantly, Coleridge's *The Ancient Mariner*: modest titles for big works - a practice stood on its head by Motton. A few lines from Mephistopheles in *Dr Faustus* say it all: "Why this is Hell, nor am I out of it. Thinkst thou that I, who saw the face of God, And tasted the eternal joys of Heaven, Am not tormented with ten thousand Hells?" I suppose that's roughly what *The Terrible*

Voice is about. Motton adds priests, sex, the IRA and a whole lot of gimmicks without moving forwards. *The Ancient Mariner* comes in with the albatross, in this case a magic bird initially huge and finally slung dead, and much diminished, around the waist of the principal character, Tom, as the boat in the Irish Sea runs into a storm. Don't forget that the word "bird" nowadays has more than one meaning.

The play is very well directed by James Macdonald. There are catching scenes of miniature cars along a track in a funeral cortege in the background, and a full-size bicycle in the foreground with stripes and simulated sex somewhere in the middle. Some of the staging draws on the National Theatre's *Carousel*.

I wouldn't fault the performances, especially Sean Murray as Tom, but the play is a terrible fall from grace. Paradise Lost.

Royal Court Theatre Upstairs. (071) 730 3554

INTERNATIONAL ARTS GUIDE

BERLIN

THEATRE
A new production of Neil Simon's play *Runaway*, directed by Wolfgang Spier, opens on Thurs at Komödie with previews tomorrow and Wed (882 7893). The Marlene Dietrich musical, *Sag mir wo die Blumen sind*, runs daily except Mon at Theater am Kurfürstendamm (300 6000). The Broadway musical *42nd Street* runs daily except Mon till July 25 at Metropol Theater (2036 4117). This month's open-air repertory at Freilichtbühne an der Zitadelle includes Schiller's *The Robbers* and Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (331 6920).

CONCERTS

Jethro Tull gives a concert tonight at Tempodrom (834 4073). There are daily jazz and rock events at Eierschale 1, II and III (832 7097, 882 5305, 272 7370). And at Marlene Bar (Hotel Inter-Continental 2602 1253). Popular choral and orchestral concerts at Gendarmenmarkt feature Berlin Symphony Orchestra on Thurs and Fri, Komische Oper Orchestra

on Sat and Berlin Symphonic Sound Orchestra on Sun (2090 2488). Nigel Kennedy and band play at ICC on July 24 (8958 9859). Placido Domingo sings at Waldbühne on July 26 (301 5055).

BONN

● Anna Tomowa-Sintow gives a song recital tonight at Bonn Opera. Tomorrow, Thurs, Sat: Francisco Araiza sings title role in Warner Schroeter's new production of Werther, conducted by Michel Sesson. Wed and Sun: Ken Russell's production of Salome. Fri: Cav and Pag. The company also presents six performances of an experimental Lohengrin opera by Sicilian composer Salvatore Sciurino, opening at the Kunst und Ausstellungshalle on Fri. The opera season runs till July 25 (773667).

● Sommer-Klassik Bonn's summer concert series includes a Bonn Sinfonietta programme on Wed at Rheinisches Landesmuseum, featuring music by Tippett, Fritzi, Oscar Strauss and Dvorak. Klassische Philharmonie Telekom Bonn gives orchestral concerts at Pappelsdorfer Schloss on July 17, 24 and 31, and at Bad Godesberger July 18 and Aug 1 (855088/832500).

DRESDEN

Semperoper Tonight: Daniel Nazareth conducts MDR Symphony Orchestra in works by Beethoven and Tchaikovsky, with piano soloist Barry Douglas. Tomorrow: Mischka Malsky cello recital. Wed: Justus Frantz and friends play Brahms' Liebesliederwalzer. Thurs:

Cyprien Katsaris piano recital. Fri: Nazareth conducts orchestral works by Beethoven and Ravel (4842 323).

FRANKFURT

● A two-week ballet season opens at the Opera House tomorrow with the first of four performances of William Forsythe's *As a Garden in This Setting*. Britain's Royal Ballet gives a week of performances starting next Tues, with Anthony Dowell's production of Swan Lake and choreographies by MacMillan and Ashton (236061).

MUNICH

OPERA FESTIVAL
The first two new productions of the festival are *Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk* starring Hildegarde Behrens (tonight) and *Die Frau ohne Schatten*, staged by a Japanese production team and conducted by Horst Stein (tomorrow and Sat). This week's other performances include *Die Zauberflöte* and *Così fan tutte*. A new production of *La traviata* with Julia Varady opens on July 25. The festival runs till Aug 7 (221316).

OTHER EVENTS

Gastelg hosts a series of jazz concerts this week, featuring Chick Corea, Herbie Hancock, Jacques Loussier, Joe Henderson, Lionel Hampton and John McLaughlin.

(4809 8614). Repertory at Gärtnerplatztheater includes *Ariadne auf Naxos* and Kurt Weill's *Street Scene* (201 6767).

NEW YORK

THEATRE
● *Kiss of the Spider Woman*: a Kander and Ebb musical based on the novel by Manuel Puig, directed by Harold Prince, with a star performance by Brent Carver as the heroic homosexual window dresser (Broadhurst, 235 West 44th St, 239 6200).
● *Angels in America*: the first part of Tony Kushner's epic, free-wheeling play about gay life, Reagan-era politics and Mormonism. Not to be missed (Walter Kerr, 219 West 48th St, 239 6200).
● *The Who's Tommy*: a stunning stage adaptation of the classic 1969 rock opera, a collaboration between its original principal author, Pete Townshend, and director Pete McNuff (St James, 246 West 44th St, 239 6200).
● *Oleanna*: David Mamet's powerful play about sexual harassment and political correctness (Orpheum, 126 Second Ave at 8th St, 307 4100).
● *Jelly's Last Jam*: the music of Jelly Roll Morton, self-proclaimed inventor of jazz, and an unsparing portrait of the man himself (Virginia, 245 West 52nd St, 239 6200).

MUSIC/DANCE

● Kurt Masur conducts New York Philharmonic Orchestra in works by Brahms and Schumann at Carnegie Hall on July 14, 15, 21, 22, 28 and 29. The soloist in Schumann's Piano Concerto in this

week's concerts is Richard Goode (247 7800).
● Mostly Mozart Festival continues daily except Sun till Aug 21 at Avery Fisher Hall. This week's concerts are conducted by Gerard Schwarz, with soloists including Christian Zacharias and Dmitri Sitkovetsky (875 5030).
● New York City Opera's 50th anniversary season opens at Lincoln Center on July 28 and runs till November 21. The opening performances are Carmen, La bohème and Madame Butterfly (870 5570).
● New York City Ballet is in residence for the next two weeks at Saratoga Performing Arts Center, Saratoga Springs (518-587 3330).

STUTTGART/LUDWIGSBURG
FESTIVAL Handspring Puppet Company from South Africa bring their Böhner adaptation, entitled *Woyzeck* on the Highways, to the Alte Keller at Bleichheim on Fri, Sat and Sun. The next event is the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra concert on July 29 (07141-949810).

VIENNA

● The season of open-air performances in the palace gardens of Schönbrunn runs till Aug 14 and features Don Giovanni and *Moscow Chamber Ballet's* staging of Mozart's *Requiem* (513 0851).
● Final performances of Vienna's Jazz Festival are Albert Collins and Etta James tonight, WasNotWas tomorrow, Los Lobos on Wed and Gangster Quartet with Donald Byrd on Thurs. Performances begin at 18.00 at Museumsquartier.

Messeplatz 1 (5454 540).

● Edinburgh Youth Orchestra plays music by Malcolm Arnold, Tchaikovsky and Shostakovich tonight at Hofburg (5151 4225). Leopold Hager conducts RTL Symphony Orchestra of Luxembourg at Theater an der Wien in orchestral works by Brahms, Dvorak, Ravel and Richard Strauss (Wed) and an opera concert (Thurs). Other events this week in Vienna's Klangbogen concert series include piano recitals by Roland Benk (Fri) and Vesselin Stanev (Sun), both at Schönbrunn (4000 8410).
● Karajan open-air film festival at Rathausplatz offers screenings of star-studded opera and concert performances from the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s, daily till July 31.

PARIS

● Final performances of the season at Opéra Bastille are *Carmen* (tonight, Thurs, Sat) with Beatrice Uria-Monzon/Denys Graves in title role and Samuel Ramey/Barseg Tumanyan as Escamillo, and *Faust* (tomorrow, Fri) with Giuseppe Sabbatini, James Morris and Nancy Gustafson (4473 1300).
● This week's guest artists at Lionel Hampton Jazz Club are Boto et Novos Tempos, Brazilian jazz and samba, daily till Sat. Next week: Tori and Richard Allen, gospel and soul (Hôtel Meridien Paris Etoile, 81 Boulevard Gouvion St Cyr, tel 4088 3042).
● Ballet de l'Opéra de Paris presents a Balanchine programme on Wed and Thurs at Arenes de Nîmes followed by Giselle on July 21, 22 and 28 (8867 2802).

ARTS GUIDE

Monday: Performing arts guide city by city.
Tuesday: Performing arts guide city by city.
Wednesday: Festivals Guide.
Thursday: Festivals Guide.
Friday: Exhibitions Guide.

European Cable and Satellite Business TV
(All times are Central European Time)

MONDAY TO THURSDAY
Super Channel: European Business Today 0730; 2230
Monday Super Channel: West of Moscow 1230.
Super Channel: Financial Times Reports 0630
Wednesday Super Channel: Financial Times Reports 2130
Thursday Sky News: Financial Times Reports 2030; 0130
Friday Super Channel: European Business Today 0730; 2230
Sky News: Financial Times Reports 0530
Saturday Super Channel: Financial Times Reports 0930
Sky News: West of Moscow 1130; 2230
Sunday Super Channel: West of Moscow 1830
Super Channel: Financial Times Reports 1900
Sky News: West of Moscow 0230; 0530
Sky News: Financial Times Reports 1330; 2030

FINANCE
Mr Yelt
dwindli

*The author is director of the
Serious Fraud Office.*

The SFO continually keeps possible reference to a regulator under review in the course of its investigations and prosecutions. The commission has endorsed this approach, provided regulatory action is capable of ensuring that a person found guilty by the appropriate regulatory tribunal can be banned from the market and ordered to compensate the victims.

The SFO is currently exploring how more fraud cases might be handled by regulators

Banks and professional firms are usually happy to co-operate when they receive a notice under the Section. It is also used to interview suspects, but the safeguard is that the power is only investigatory. A transcript of an interview under the Section cannot be admitted in evidence unless the witness changes his story. Also the

*The author is director of the
Serious Fraud Office.*



It is regrettable that Lord Runciman and his colleagues should not have not thought fit to make this essential recommendation, so that in future we would not have to appoint

Does society believe white collar criminals pose a greater threat than rapists?

Indeed, if the SFO and CPD are merged we are looking at Section 2 powers being delegated to possibly thousands of police officers nationwide.

One of the commission's recommendations which

Monty Raphael

The author is the senior partner of the criminal law firm Peter & Peters

Defining fiscal de

Pinpoint Europe's decision

Name _____
Company _____
Address _____

Telephone _____ Fax _____

Alastair Goodlad,
*minister of state,
Foreign & Commonwealth
Office,
London SW1A 2AH*

The working party rejected the normal approach to profit forecasts, on the grounds that the work involved was excessive and it was not part of the reporting accountant's brief to comment on the assumptions.

they see no reason why the company's committed facilities should not be extended beyond the review date, thus allowing the board to look to a date 18 months beyond the balance sheet date. It is then a matter

A L Wallis,
group finance director,
AAH Holdings,
26 South Park, Lincoln

Fax 071 873 5938. Letters transmitted should be clearly typed and not hand written. Please set fax for finest resolution

Alastair Goodlad,
minister of state,
Foreign & Commonwealth
Office,
London SW1A 2AH

The working party rejected the normal approach to profit forecasts, on the grounds that the work involved was excessive and it was not part of the reporting accountant's brief to comment on the assumptions.

tions, a Galt agreement is by no means assured. As you said,

When they start to pay much more than lin service to a

11 Fairbridge Road,
Auckland, New Zealand

Inflation: they are merely a means of translating one country's prices into a form which can be compared with another's. Short-term fluctuations - especially dramatic ones such as those associated with the exit of sterling, the lira, the Spanish peseta and the Portuguese escudo from the

general level of UK prices to roughly the EC average, with some models still costing 20 to 30 per cent more than in other countries. Whether even this state of affairs remains depends heavily on the car manufacturers' pricing policies in the UK, and on the manufacturers' ability to resist the

would be justified in varying their pre-tax prices in a way that maximises their investment returns. But we don't have an unrestrained market - EC limits on price differences were introduced as part of the "deal" on selective and exclusive distribution.

twice-yearly car price comparisons will start to give us a clear, authoritative picture of whether the EC single market for cars is a myth or, at last, a reality.

Stephen Locke,
director of policy,
Consumers Association,
2 Marlybone Road

[illegible]

هذه امه الاصل

FINANCIAL TIMES

Number One Southwark Bridge, London SE1 9HL
Tel: 071-873 3000 Telex: 922186 Fax: 071-407 5700

Monday July 12 1993

Mr Yeltsin's dwindling power

RUSSIA'S President Boris Yeltsin insisted that he went to last week's summit of the Group of Seven industrial nations in Tokyo as leader of a great power. But at home, the state he represents is looking weaker by the day. Government remains gripped by debilitating, and overlapping, power struggles between president and parliament, centre and regions. Mr Yeltsin battles to gain acceptance of a complex new constitution, and in the process hands away an increasing array of powers and rights from the centre. And one by one, Russia's regions appear to be seizing their own destiny: in the past 10 days alone, the parliaments of the Far Eastern region and of Sverdlovsk in the Urals have claimed the status of republics within Russia, thus asserting greater economic independence in an escalating battle between the regions and the centre for control over resources.

In theory, the outcome of this process could be violent anarchy, as ever-smaller units of population or territory dispute the legitimacy or effectiveness of rule from Moscow and take matters into their own hands. In practice, it has not yet come to that. But to prevent the current mess turning into something a great deal worse, Russia obviously needs greater clarity in the relations between its multifarious centres of power. Ideally, this would be provided by a new constitution setting out in brief, general but unequivocal terms the respective rights and duties of the Russian state and its subjects. Unfortunately, this is far from what seems to be emerging from the constitutional debate which is now reaching a climax.

Empty rights

Russia cannot continue with its present, Soviet-era, constitution, patched up with liberal additions. Its main flaw, graphically demonstrated at succeeding Congresses of People's Deputies over the past year, is that it gave ample but empty rights to the Supreme Soviet (legislature) and made little provision for an executive president. Despite the popular mandate which he was elected in 1991, Mr Yeltsin's attempts to run a democratic presidential republic with a communist "parliamentary" constitution were doomed to end in confrontation.

The problem is that this struggle cannot begin to be decisively

resolved without adoption of a new, more legitimate constitution - and that such a constitution cannot legally be adopted without the agreement of the Supreme Soviet, a body which would thus be voting itself out of existence. Though Mr Yeltsin's hand has strengthened, especially since the endorsement of the April referendum, he is still in the position of having to act unconstitutionally in order to put the state on a democratic base - a move he has seemed prepared to make several times but from which he has always backed away.

Structural problems

The important question is whether the constitution as it is emerging is the right one for Russia and will stand the test of time. It is admirably dedicated to human and civil rights; underpins the right to private property; and pledges allegiance to independent judiciary and media. But it is too long on detail, some of it contradictory. It gives citizens too many economic rights like free medical care, employment and minimum wages which Russia cannot fulfil.

Worst of all, it does not address the deep structural problems left behind by the Soviet state, simply accepting the Lenin-Stalin territorial division of the country into regions and "ethno-territorial" republics and granting the latter more rights than the former. Small wonder that the regions are now seeking to redress the imbalance by declaring themselves as republics too, and that Russia's most numerically important minorities - the Caucasians, Central Asians, Balts and Ukrainians - complain they have been left without guarantees of their linguistic and other cultural rights.

All this may not prevent Mr Yeltsin from forcing through his constitution in something resembling its present form. But it is hard to see such a document settling Russia's chronic constitutional uncertainties once and for all. As they promise yet more money to assist the country's political and economic transformation - and to shore up Mr Yeltsin's centre - G7 leaders would do well to remember that on both fronts, the evolution is going to be both protracted and messy. It is in no one's interest that Russia should disintegrate, but in the end no one may be able to stop it doing so.

Defining the fiscal deficit

THE DEBATE over the UK budget deficit is taking place in a fog of spurious assertions about how much of it is "cyclical" and how much is "structural". It is a crucial question, but the truth is that no-one will know the answer for a number of years, if ever. In the meantime, the government should focus more on reducing the deficit rather than on defining it.

At a meeting of European Community finance ministers Kenneth Clarke will today be defending the British government's economic plans against the charge that they betray undue optimism about the £50bn budget deficit. The criticism is partly based on John Major's claim that 70 per cent of the gap is cyclical, and will therefore fall as the economy picks up. EC officials consider this dangerously complacent, citing OECD estimates that less than half of the deficit, now 8 per cent of GDP, can be so summarily dismissed. The rest, they say, is a structural increase in spending that requires further attention. Which is right? The sheer size of the gap between deficit "cyclists" and "structuralists" is a good clue that the desire for precision is misplaced. Both sides could make things clearer, however, if they bothered to separate two distinct issues. First, what part of the rise in public borrowing has occurred as a result of the recession? And second, how much of that will go away as the economy picks up again? The first question can be answered relatively easily. Unfortunately, it is not the one upon which the sustainability of the British public finances depends.

Lower tax revenues

The automatic effects on the budget of the recent decline in UK output are quite well understood. If, in 1990, the British economy had continued to grow at a steady pace, output would now be around 7 per cent higher. Losing that output to the recession led to higher public spending and lower tax revenues which between them left the Public Sector Borrowing Requirement 4.7 per cent higher as a percentage of GDP than it would otherwise have been.

Accelerating debt

The size of the UK Public Sector Borrowing Requirement sets a clock ticking on Britain's uncertain growth prospects, because of the cumulative effect on the national debt. If British GDP were to grow 3 per cent on average over the next three years, the PSBR should fall to around 4 per cent of GDP in 1997. By then, consistently high levels of public borrowing would have increased the national debt to 55 per cent of GDP compared with 42 per cent in 1992. If, however, yearly growth averaged only 1.5 per cent, the PSBR would be almost unchanged and the debt ratio would be rising towards 75 per cent. This kind of accelerating debt would have too many of the traits of the 1970s crisis.

Mr Clarke may be unable to control either the degree of spare capacity in the economy or the rate at which it grows over the next few years. He can, however, determine how much any given rate of growth goes towards reducing the PSBR. Considering the stakes involved, he should commit himself to tightening fiscal policy further, as a hedge against disappointing growth. If this turns out to be over-cautious, he could always compensate by lowering interest rates. Better that he lose the prize for labelling the deficit correctly than risk the horrors of an old-fashioned public debt crisis.

Just before the International Olympic Committee meets in Monte Carlo in September to choose where to stage the 2000 games, a trade mission from north-west England plans to fly to Paris.

The idea is to take advantage of the publicity surrounding Manchester's Olympic bid. Members of the mission, put together by Manchester's Chamber of Commerce and Industry and the accountants, lawyers, bankers and business advisers who make up the city's Financial and Professional Forum, will be talking to their opposite numbers in the Paris chamber about doing more business together.

Such marketing is part of a new age of civic entrepreneurship in Europe, according to Professor Michael Parkinson, director of the European Institute for Urban Affairs at Liverpool John Moores University. He says it started less than 10 years ago, with several of Europe's old cities fighting back against what was widely seen as terminal decline.

Public and private sectors have banded together, sometimes informally, sometimes through organisations formed to promote the cities they depend on for a living. All have pushed cities rather than regions, and broad economic development rather than solutions to specific urban social problems.

Parkinson's institute - which used to be the Centre for Urban Studies at Liverpool University, but negotiated a transfer to the more entrepreneurial "Liverpool John" last year - has recently completed a three-year study of 24 cities for the European Commission.

One of the most telling examples is Hamburg. In 1985 its chamber of commerce and 10 leading banks set up the Hamburg Business Development Corporation to attract new companies and improve support for existing ones. Target sectors were the media, information technology, electronics, aviation, medicine, biotechnology, harbour services and environmental technologies.

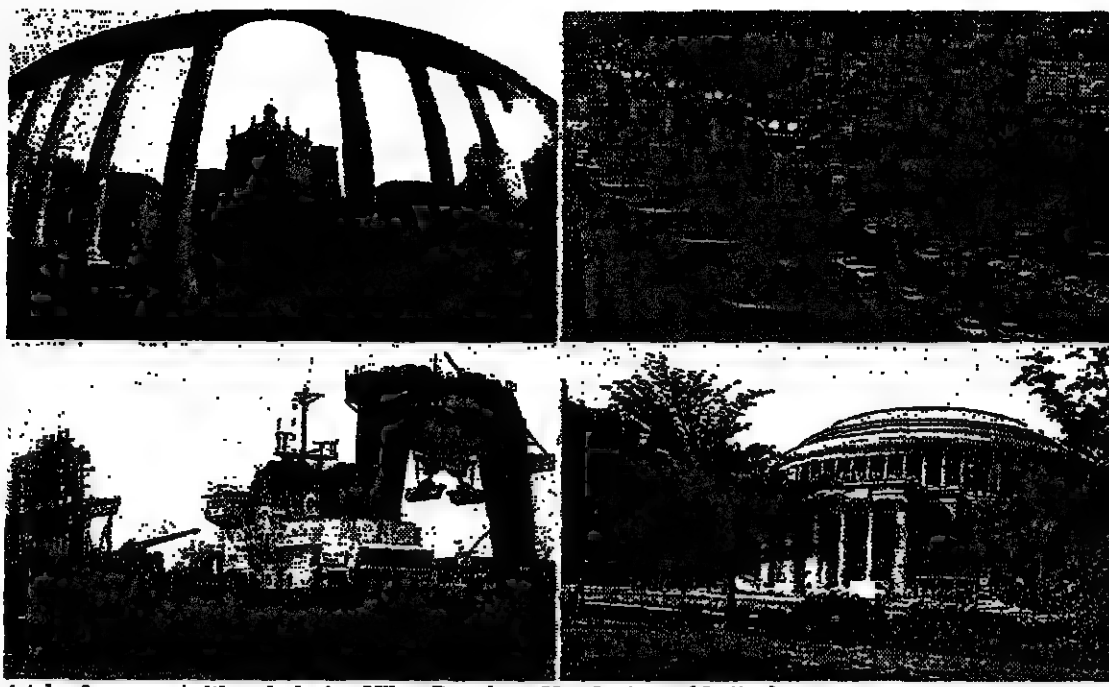
Udo Martens-Jeebe, the corporation's director, says its first five years brought in 387 new companies: 17 from Germany, the rest from Scandinavia, Taiwan, China, the UK, Japan, Korea and the US. The corporation acted as consultant to 789 businesses. She says an estimated 15,000 jobs were created and capital investment of DM8.7bn (£1.45bn) boosted construction.

Other cities have used particular events as a focus for team-building. Manchester's Olympic bid is an example. According to KPMG PwC Marwick, the accountant, Manchester's bid will be worth £200m to the city even if it falls.

Last week, Ogden, a leading US entertainment management group, signed a 20-year contract to run the

In search of the urban idyll

There is a new spirit of civic entrepreneurship in Europe's cities, says Ian Hamilton Fazey



A tale of resurgent cities: clockwise, Milan, Barcelona, Manchester and Rotterdam

Manchester arena from its opening in 1995. The group will create more than 700 jobs in the city.

Other cities behaving in an entrepreneurial manner include:

● Rotterdam's development board, Rotor, a joint venture of the municipality and the chamber of commerce. It works as a think-tank, helping to balance social concerns such as poor housing with economic solutions.

The city's publicly owned port authority modernised the docks and improved the local transport infrastructure. Parallel investment in office space by the private sector during the 1980s has been justified by annual growth of up to 10 per cent in the numbers employed in professional services. A "brainpark" for small, high-technology companies was set up near a university.

● Dortmund's civic leaders developed closer ties with the private sector after a large factory closure in 1981. As a result, the emphasis switched from social to economic priorities. Research and development centres for transport technology and

robotics were attracted, and a technology transfer system set up between university, polytechnic and the chamber of commerce.

● Montpellier evolved what it called a "technopole" strategy in 1985 - a development agency supported by all sectors of the community to focus growth on medicine, computer technology, agronomy, communications and leisure.

"Cities are back on the agenda, not as basket cases but as economic leaders," Parkinson says. "Cities have to be re-evaluated. They need to be recognised again as the wealth of nations. They are great sources of added value. In Europe, there is an emerging network of cities with similar entrepreneurial outlooks."

He suggests the most successful entrepreneurial cities are those which have defined themselves as European, rather than by their regional or national role. Glasgow, Manchester, Birmingham, Rotterdam, Hamburg, Barcelona, Lyons, Lille, Dortmund, Stuttgart, Frankfurt and Milan are all examples.

Many have started forming trans-European networks. For example,

Rotterdam Port Promotions Council, backed by most Netherlands businesses dependent on trade through the Maas estuary, has been touring Europe this year to build contacts and seek out business. It stresses Rotterdam's "gateway" role to Europe's road, rail and inland waterway freight networks.

Another example is Manchester, which has joined an association of similar regional capitals that have developed as financial centres in their own right, shaking off the domination of their countries' capital cities. Manchester boasts more than 50 banks from around the world and a 50-strong venture capital community. There is also a group of 100 corporate finance advisers that offers "mini merchant banking" for medium-sized companies, acting in mergers, acquisitions and disposals. Their fee income is running at more than £20m a year.

Other cities in the group include Barcelona, Bilbao, Turin, Stuttgart, Lyons and Edinburgh. A network of successful cities, therefore, seems to be emerging across Europe, with each a focus for

growth and regional economic hegemony. Even the urban population decline of the 1970s and 1980s is slowing as old cities bounce back.

Parkinson says: "After 15 years of decline, at some point in the mid-1980s, big cities started to grow again, or at the very least, they started stabilising. The trend is solid and is reversing the former outward drift of population. We are developing a Europe of the cities, not a Europe of the regions."

One problem of such patchwork economic development is that benefits are not evenly distributed between cities, within them, or between cities and the regions around them. In some cases, inequalities are emerging between neighbours. Marseilles, for example, has not developed a coherent strategy like Montpellier and, Parkinson says, lags in economic development.

Liverpool similarly lags behind Manchester, only 35 miles away. This is partly because it is smaller, with a less diverse economic base. One in six men traditionally earns a living through manual work. Male unemployment rates of about 25 per cent have fuelled internal divisions in the city and - for 10 years to 1991 - caused image-damaging political strife. Only this year have public and private sectors set up an office to work together - seven or eight years behind comparable cities.

Even within successful cities, individual beneficiaries are mainly educated, qualified or trained people. Parkinson warns: "You have a polarised labour market, overlaid with the problems of ethnic minorities and immigrants. Some people are being excluded. We found that Hamburg has more millionaires than anywhere else in Europe, but more people on welfare. One of the key challenges of the next couple of decades will be how to include the excluded. Another will be how to improve a city's competitiveness without increasing the social cost."

One problem for the European Community is that it allocates funds for economic development on the basis of reducing regional imbalances. But this means two cities with similar problems are treated differently because of their geographical location.

If the Europe of the cities thesis proves correct, it may require some shift in the way the EC targets its regional aid. But the bigger implication is that, as cities compete in the way that corporations do, the case for better urban government, capable of taking a long view about investment in infrastructure and human resources, will become ever more irresistible.

Urbanisation and the Functions of Cities in the European Community, EC, Luxembourg, Dec 1992.

Samuel Brittan

Trade and macroeconomics



The Tokyo trade package is likely to help growth, jobs and output, even though some of the estimates given by summit participants are highly misleading. The main reason should be given by that unsatisfactory, but occasionally unavoidable, word "confidence". News that increases the chances of a successful conclusion of the Uruguay Round should raise what Keynes called the "animal spirits" of businessmen when they consider whether to invest, increase stocks or take on workers.

Although this effect is probable, I am much more certain of a negative statement. A breakdown of the Gatt talks and the associated risk of trade wars, would have dealt a severe blow to confidence at a time when it is fragile and would have risked turning prolonged recession into depression.

It is, however, noticeable that neither academic macroeconomists nor economic commentators have been in the forefront of the trade debate. One of the reasons is the pressure of specialisation. Trade negotiations are detailed, commodity-by-commodity affairs which only full-time experts can follow properly.

There is a more interesting reason for the lack of contact between the two worlds. This is the difficulty of making true intellectual contact, which goes back a very long time. In most popular histories of the Great Depression, the savage increase in the US tariffs under the Smoot-Hawley Act of 1930 is given a large role in converting the recession of the early 1930s into the Great Depression. Yet it receives hardly a mention in many monetarist and Keynesian accounts. I can find no reference to it or anything related to it in either Friedman's Monetary History or Galbraith's Great Crash.

In contemporary debates, macroeconomists have used the threat of

"increased protection" (please not "protectionism", which adds a redundant extra syllable and should be used only to describe the belief, not the phenomenon) to browbeat their opponents about what would happen if their own favourite nostrums failed to be accepted.

The plague of popular economic discussion is the fear of what Mill called a general glut

There is a real difficulty in translating from the world of trade negotiations into that of conjunctural issues. The frequent citations of the number of jobs supposed to be created are based on the Gatt estimate of a \$200bn (£133bn) per annum increase in world trade from a successful conclusion of the whole Uruguay Round. But this usage is a cheat. The Gatt estimate is of the

increase in trade between countries, not of output, not of welfare and still less of employment. Freer trade reallocates jobs more efficiently inside each country but does not directly destroy or create new jobs.

There are yet further reasons for the embarrassment of economists on trade issues. They can be summed up by Friedman's saying, "Protection is better in theory, free trade is better in practice." There have been recurrent complicated theories over the centuries trying to show that there are benefits to individual countries from certain carefully chosen kinds of protection. The May issue of the American Economic Review is partly devoted to professional disquiet on what the public and their students should therefore be told.

Professor Paul Krugman, who has invented many of the supposed exceptions to free trade theory, now believes that the likely benefits are small; that any exceptions will be wrongly chosen; and that undergraduates will benefit more from a

thorough exposure to the mainline case for free trade.

Most popular support for protection has nothing to do with esoteric trade theories. "How can we compete," it is asked, "with Czech workers being paid a tenth of ours and south-east Asian workers being paid one hundredth?" The most effective refutation is to be found not in trade theory but in the elementary macroeconomic exposition of the circular flow of funds.

An excellent example is in Friedman's Free To Choose, where he shows step by step how the proceeds from Japanese exports (the *honey* when he was writing) are used either directly to purchase goods from other countries or contribute indirectly by capital exports. The plague of popular economic discussion is the fear of what Mill called a general glut; and there is no more important task than to explain why a glut is extremely unlikely given a background of moderately sensible fiscal, monetary and exchange rate policies.

OBSERVER



Although they're a snip at the official going-rate, he says, anyone preferring a bulk deal could have them as a job lot for £7,000. What's more, the youngest is only 27.

Flotation

As the New York Post sinks in the west, Rupert Murdoch is evidently preparing a new launch in the Pacific. Although he gave up keeping a yacht after moving from Australia to London, his move to sunny Los Angeles has set sea fever burning again.

The result is a custom built sailing boat which, if it successfully

completes its trials in the Mediterranean later in the summer, will set course for California and the South Seas.

A sign that the News Corporation boss is beginning to wind down for retirement? On the contrary, the buzz round the fleet is that it more probably portends his intention to establish new business beach-heads in Asia.

Accordingly - and even though, at 100ft-plus overall, the vessel is modest compared with the flagships of other media moguls - it would be more fitting to address him as Admiral than Cap'n.

Team effort

Meanwhile, even if the New York Post is bound for the breakers, perhaps Murdoch could at least prevent the Big Apple's favourite baseball club from transferring its flag to another city.

That is the fate being threatened for the New York Yankees by their tempestuous owner George Steinbrenner. And though he has mouthed menaces before, this time he seems deadly serious.

The Yankees' successes haven't stopped attendances from falling by more than a third these past five years, which Steinbrenner blames partly on the rundown stadium, nicknamed the Bronx zoo after its site in one of the poorest districts around. Put bluntly, his ultimatum is that either New York helps to rebuild the stadium, or

the team will leave for financially friendlier climes.

Understandably, being desperate to revive the impoverished South Bronx, New York's governor Mario Cuomo wants the Yankees to stay put. But if Steinbrenner insists on moving when his lease expires, then Cuomo would like to set up the club up on a 30-acre site west of midtown Manhattan.

In which case, it is hoped, Murdoch might be tempted to finance the building of a new home for the Yankees as part of a huge new entertainment complex. After all, while the plan sounds mighty expensive, it is of a scale to match his far from under-developed ego, not to mention those of Cuomo and Steinbrenner to boot.

The three of them have already had a preliminary discussion, Observer hears.

Pint taken

Even if Manchester's bid to host the Olympics fails owing to lack of sun, the local nightlife is clearly bidding for intellectual acclaim.

In September, Manchester's Institute for Popular Culture is hosting two days of egg-head discussions on the economic impact of the evening economy of cities, in which the star attraction will be a chance to "experience Manchester's night-time economy at first hand".

Do they mean a pub crawl, by any chance?

Germany suggests EC funds for French farms

By Peter Norman, Economics Editor, in London

GERMANY has suggested channelling European Community funds to French farmers to win France's support for an agreement cutting farm subsidies in the Uruguay Round of trade liberalisation talks.

The suggestion came in advance of today's resumption of the long dormant Uruguay Round of talks in Geneva, at which negotiators from the so-called Quad countries - the US, the European Community, Japan and Canada - will be trading partners on their tariff-cutting deal reached at last week's Group of Seven summit in Tokyo.

Mr Günter Rexrodt, the German economics minister, said at the Tokyo meeting that financial concessions could play an

important role in winning "one European Community partner" for an agreement on agricultural trade.

The German minister did not name France in his remarks to journalists. However, French objections are holding up an EC-US agreement on reducing subsidies in agricultural trade that could form the basis of further international negotiations under the auspices of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade.

Mr Rexrodt said he considered that farm trade problems would prove to be the "sticking point" in reaching a final pact on global trade liberalisation and that the most important issue was working out how much subsidised farm produce could be exported by the EC and the US.

He believed that problems of agricultural trade could be dealt

with through a financial agreement that would enable "an EC partner country" to overcome structural and regional problems more easily than at present.

He admitted, however, that there would be less money available for other EC countries if Community funds were used to compensate farmers in one state for any losses arising from a deal on farm trade in the context of the Uruguay Round.

The individual EC countries do not negotiate in the Uruguay Round - that task is left to the European Commission. But Mr Rexrodt stressed that he was close to the talks, partly because Mr Mickey Kantor, the US trade representative, had approached the German government before to mediate in disputes between the US and France.

US-Japan trade deal, Page 4

Reformers step up challenge to Italy's main party

By Haig Simonian in Milan

MR MARIO SEGNI, the popular leader of Italy's referendum movement, is expected to join forces with the cross-party Democratic Alliance movement this week in a union that could form the basis for a new, broad-based party capable of challenging the majority Christian Democrats for the political middle ground.

Mr Segni, who broke away from the Christian Democrats earlier this year, has been a leading advocate of political reform and clean government. The Democratic Alliance is a loose reformist movement set up by politicians who have left their parties in recent months in protest at corruption and obstacles to political reform.

Members include Mr Giorgio Ruffolo, the former Socialist environment minister, and Mr Giuseppe Ayala, previously a leading anti-Mafia judge and now a Republican MP.

Delegates at the Alliance's national convention in Florence on Saturday were read a message from Mr Segni suggesting the movement should now move towards transforming itself into an official political party. His message came as tension increased within the Christian Democratic party, which has been discredited by the corruption scandal.

Ms Rosi Bindi, a regional party leader who has spearheaded calls for reform, proposed at the weekend to make the party's Veneto region the testbed for change. Addressing a conference in the spa town of Abano, Ms Bindi proposed changing the party's name and adopting a reformist programme.

Her demands came just a fortnight before a crucial Christian Democratic national convention, which may mark the party's last chance to agree on changes, possibly including a new name, before others follow Mr Segni's example. The party could break up if reform does not come quickly.

Pressure on the Christian Democrats to distance themselves from the corruption scandal has been reinforced by the strength of the federalist Lombard League. At its annual meeting in Pontida, near Bergamo, Mr Umberto Bossi, the League's leader, yesterday threatened to declare a tax strike if President Oscar Luigi Scalfaro did not call a general election after parliamentary approval of the 1994 budget later this year.

Mr Carlo Azeglio Ciampi, prime minister, met senior cabinet colleagues yesterday to discuss the government's budget plans for 1994-95.

Next year's budget is expected to contain measures, mainly spending cuts, to reduce the estimated L130,000bn (\$117bn) budget deficit by between L35,000bn and L40,000bn next year.

THE LEX COLUMN Prudential regulation

Mr Mick Newmarch of the Prudential has made no secret of his implacable opposition to the Personal Investment Authority, the proposed self-regulatory body for retail financial services. The decision of investment firms to choose their regulator is enshrined in the Financial Services Act, so the threat of a boycott is by no means idle. Without the willing participation of the country's biggest life insurer, the PIA would lack credibility. Since Mr Andrew Large of the Securities and Investments Board has made the PIA's success a cornerstone of his crusade to make the two-tier regulatory system work, the stakes are high.

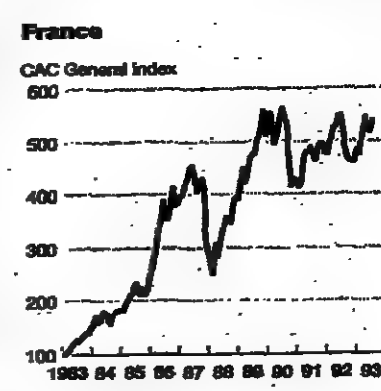
Others in the industry have chosen a more pragmatic approach: since the government is unwilling to introduce new legislation, the best chance of avoiding an embarrassing public row is to make the best of the existing system by signing up with the PIA. But it remains uncertain whether the PIA will deliver an adequate standard of regulation. Even full transparency on sales commissions for life assurance might not weed out sharp practice. Mr Newmarch is surely correct to say that a regulator capable of banning inadequate savings products and over-enthusiastic sales methods may yet be required.

It is unlikely that the PIA - even with the participation of all comers - could fulfil such a role. Without statutory backing and an independent staff, the conflicts of interest would be great. It is a gamble, but if Mr Newmarch's opposition forces the government to look again at the question of legislation he will be doing the financial community a service.

French privatisation

With western European governments vying to raise up to \$150bn (£100.4bn) by selling corporate assets for reform, proposed at the weekend to make the party's Veneto region the testbed for change. Addressing a conference in the spa town of Abano, Ms Bindi proposed changing the party's name and adopting a reformist programme.

Some companies on the list, such as Elf Aquitaine, are well known quoted businesses which should easily attract investors. The Paris market has been starved of good quality industrial



stocks. The government, though, may face a stiffer challenge in selling others, such as Air France and Bull, which require extensive restructuring. Moreover, recent opinion polls suggest the public is lukewarm about the programme. This is hardly surprising after the unhappy experiences surrounding the first wave of privatisation. Having been seduced into buying shares in 1986, investors watched the market crash the following year. Since then, most have reverted to high interest money market funds.

The government, though, has been devising schemes to rekindle enthusiasm for equities. Tax breaks, free shares and higher dividends for loyal shareholders are some of the latest wheezes. The FF40bn Balladur bond, convertible into shares in privatised stocks, provides a further ingenious enticement.

The critical determinant of privatisation's success, however, may be the scale of foreign involvement. Despite the irritations of French companies' shareholding structures, international investors seem tempted. This largely reflects the belief that the government cannot afford privatisation to fail. The hope is that the best assets will be sold first at attractive prices. The conservative government certainly needs tangible successes before the presidential elections in 1995. Hemmed in by the big budget deficit, the strong franc and a commitment to fiscal austerity, the government will rely heavily on privatisation proceeds to help stimulate the fast fading economy. The need to tackle unemployment is a political imperative. Ironically, unemployment may worsen as companies heading for privatisation slim down their workforces.

The precarious state of the economy will remain the greatest worry. San-

guine investors may believe recession will enable them to invest at the bottom of the cycle. The majority, though, will surely be deterred by the dismal outlook for corporate earnings. Given the pressures, the French government must be sorely tempted to sell its soul and permit the franc's devaluation. Such a Faustian compact would be the balm for almost all its short-term ills. Falling interest rates, a surging stock market and a renaissance industrial competitiveness would provide the perfect backdrop for the flotation of privatisation issues. If last week's market pressures develop, the government's resolve may be fiercely tested once again.

Scottish Water

The government's proposals for Scottish water suggest it has come round to the view that the sledge hammer of privatisation is not required to crack the public spending unit. Scotland's three new water authorities will remain in public sector control, but that will conveniently remove up to £5bn from the public sector borrowing requirement over the next decade with less risk of opprobrium from voters north of the border. Since only 1 per cent of respondents to last year's consultation paper were in favour of privatisation, a compromise was always on the cards.

On what terms private sector capital will be invited to participate remains an open question. The new authorities might offer three big, long-term operating contracts - on the French model - or a series of smaller contracts for building and operating individual plants. Either way, the private sector will be responsible for providing capital as well as manpower. The bigger water companies may thus enjoy some competitive advantage by dint of their lower average cost of funds. The French giants Lyonnaise and Générale des Eaux will doubtless jostle for position near the front of the queue.

Since English water companies are anxious for unregulated earnings, the likes of North West and Thames cannot be ruled out of the running. Building a water treatment plant in Strathclyde may be viewed in much the same light as processing sewage in Kuala Lumpur, only rather less risky. The return they are prepared to accept under such competitive conditions will be a telling pointer to whether the English regulator has kept them on a tight enough rein.

Nadir strengthens links with government of north Cyprus

By John Murray Brown in Istanbul

MR ASIL NADIR, the fugitive businessman, was due to meet with north Cypriot president Rauf Denktaş last night, for the first time since he fled the UK in May. The meeting comes amid further signs the island government is co-operating to block the efforts of the administrators to Polly Peck International, Mr Nadir's former company.

On Friday, the finance ministry announced that a pharmaceutical plant belonging to Polly Peck International, Mr Nadir's former company, would be auctioned to settle debts owed to the break-away north Cypriot government. The government says it is owed TL45bn (\$4m) in unpaid debts to the local social security agency.

The administrators were earlier close to concluding the sale of ICP, the drug company, and had convened a shareholders' meeting for July 27 in a move to replace Mr Nadir as a director.

Local lawyers say the government's latest action is seen as further collusion with Mr Nadir to frustrate the sales of the northern Cyprus assets - one of the last hopes of raising cash for the 23,000 PPI creditors, owed a total of £1.5m (\$2bn).

In London last week, in a move aimed at winning over the northern Cyprus authorities, Mr Christopher Morris of Touche Ross, one of the three court appointed administrators, formally apologised to the Turkish Cypriot central bank over allegations of fraud and money laundering in a suit against the bank and other plaintiffs in October 1991.

Mr Nadir, in a front page signed editorial in his Kibris newspaper, yesterday gave warm endorsement to the government in urging Turkish Cypriots to show solidarity against "threats and blackmail from outside". Mr Nadir also announced plans to launch another newspaper and a magazine, a further indication that he intends to resume his

business activities on the island. Mr Nadir's newspaper has been strongly supportive of the government, and local officials say company money was reportedly used to buy votes in the last election in 1990.

The administrators were last week in discussions with the finance ministry in Nicosia, in the latest attempt to gain access to the local companies. Their efforts have been frustrated by court injunctions and a government freezing order on 37 companies connected to Mr Nadir.

As the biggest shareholder of ICP, the administrators are seeking to get around this by calling an extraordinary meeting for July 27 to replace Mr Nadir and other directors, as a first step to selling the company.

Last night Mr Nadir, the former chairman of Polly Peck International, was expected to meet both Mr Denktaş and Mr Dervis Eroglu, the prime minister, at a party to celebrate the fifth anniversary of Kibris.

Visa service

Continued from Page 1

days, but would guarantee a six-day transfer. He said it would also guarantee a clear quotation of charges and exchange rates at the start.

Royal Bank of Scotland is planning a corporate launch of its flos transfer system run with Credit Commercial de France, Banco Santander in Spain and Banco de Comercio e Industria in Portugal. Ilos offers virtually instant transfer.

National Westminster Bank is also thought to be working on a new cross-border payment system with Société Générale of France and Commerzbank of Germany.

Bosnian federation plan

Continued from Page 1

republic along ethnic lines despite the urging for an agreement from international peace mediators Lord Owen and Thorvald Stoltenberg or face disaster in the winter.

Mrs Sadako Ogata, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) said the Bosnian operation was running out of money and called for a conference in Geneva on Friday to discuss the considerable problems impeding the relief effort.

While she did not say that the UNHCR would pull out of Bosnia, she accused all three sides of sabotaging the relief operation. "Every day is quite a difficult

day to decide or to know what we can do," she told BBC radio, adding that money supplies would last only for the next three weeks. Mrs Ogata's remarks came as water supplies dipped dangerously low in Sarajevo. The Bosnian capital has no electricity, oil or gas.

Meanwhile, hospitalised opposition leader Vuk Draskovic was recuperating at the weekend after he abandoned his hunger strike. Fearing mass unrest if Mr Draskovic died, Serbian president Slobodan Milosevic on Friday ordered the pardon of the opposition politician and his wife, Danica, who were arrested during violent anti-government protests on June 1.

FT WORLD WEATHER

Europe today

A frontal zone will cause rain over southern Scandinavia, western Russia and Romania. Ahead of the front, it will be sunny in southern Russia and Turkey. Over northern Scandinavia, it will be mainly cloudy, but dry. Showers, locally with thunder, will develop over Germany, Poland and the Alps. Over the Low Countries and England there will be sunny spells, but in Ireland, it will be mainly cloudy with some rain later.

Temperatures will remain rather low for this time of the year over the north-west of Europe. Over Greece, there will be some clouds, but elsewhere in southern Europe, it will be sunny and temperatures will rise to 25C-31C.

Five-day forecast

Depressions will move from the British Isles to the north-west of the Continent and this will bring a fair amount of rain to the UK and the Low Countries. The temperature will slowly rise to more reasonable levels. In southern Scandinavia a local shower will form. Thunder showers will develop over central and eastern Europe from Wednesday on. Also, Italy will have some showers. Over Spain and Portugal, it will be mainly sunny and temperatures will reach 30C.

TODAY'S TEMPERATURES

Location	Maximum	Minimum
Abu Dhabi	32	24
Accra	27	24
Algiers	29	24
Amsterdam	16	15
Athens	26	17
Bangkok	34	24
Barcelona	24	18
Beijing	28	17
Belfast	17	11
Belgrade	21	11
Berlin	19	10
Bombay	31	22
Buenos Aires	27	19
Budapest	22	13
Calcutta	30	21
Cape Town	27	18
Caracas	28	19
Chicago	26	17
Cologne	17	10
Copenhagen	15	10
D'Salazar	27	17
Dakar	31	22
Dallas	26	17
Darwin	30	21
Delhi	31	22
Dubai	31	22
Dublin	17	10
Dubrovnik	27	18
Edinburgh	16	10
Faro	26	17
Frankfurt	17	10
Glasgow	17	10
Hamburg	17	10
Helsinki	17	10
Hong Kong	30	21
Honolulu	31	22
Ile de Man	17	10
Istanbul	27	18
Jersey	17	10
Karachi	31	22
Kuala Lumpur	27	18
La Paz	26	17
Las Palmas	26	17
London	17	10
Los Angeles	26	17
Luxembourg	17	10
Lyon	17	10
Madrid	26	17
Manila	30	21
Melbourne	26	17
Mexico City	26	17
Miami	30	21
Milan	26	17
Monterrey	26	17
Moscow	17	10
Murcia	27	18
Nairobi	31	22
Nagasaki	27	18
Nassau	26	17
New York	26	17
Nice	26	17
Nicosia	26	17
Oaxaca	26	17
Osaka	26	17
Paris	17	10
Perth	26	17
Prague	26	17
Rio de Janeiro	26	17
Rangoon	30	21
Raykjavik	17	10
Riyadh	30	21
Rome	26	17
S' Francisco	26	17
Seoul	26	17
Singapore	30	21
Stockholm	17	10
Strasbourg	17	10
Sydney	26	17
Taipei	26	17
Tokyo	26	17
Toronto	26	17
Tunis	30	21
Ulaanbaatar	26	17
Vancouver	26	17
Venice	26	17
Vienna	26	17
Warsaw	17	10
Washington	26	17
Wellington	17	10
Winnipeg	26	17
Zurich	17	10

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COMPANIES AND FINANCE

Final Cray bonus tranche likely

By Paul Taylor

THE FINAL tranche of a share-option based incentive bonus package, worth in total between £25m and £35m, for the former chairman and three senior directors of Cray Electronics, is likely to be triggered tomorrow when the group announces its 1992-93 results.

The complex three-part bonus package was approved by Cray shareholders in December 1989 when a new management team led by Sir Peter Michael, the former

chairman of UEL, was installed after the company was widely criticised for its accounting policies and forced to revise its profits downwards.

The four beneficiaries of the scheme are Sir Peter, who stepped down as chairman at the start of last month, his successor, Mr Roger Holland, Mr Jeff Harrison, finance director, and Mr Jon Richards, group managing director.

Under the terms of the scheme, devised by SG Warburg, Cray's financial adviser, the four executives were enti-

tled to subscribe for cut-price deferred convertible shares and deferred redeemable shares, depending on the group's share price and its financial performance measured by earnings per share.

The share price has risen sharply over 12 months, closing at 161p on Friday, and results, boosted by disposals and timely acquisitions, have bounced back from a £2.79m pre-tax loss in 1989-90 to pre-tax profit of £3.5m in 1991-92.

As a result the pre-conditions triggering the first two

tranches of the incentive scheme have already been met. The size and value of the third tranche of share options depends upon the level of earnings in the year to April 30, and the share price at the time of conversion.

The potential value of the share option incentive scheme raised some eyebrows at the time - one analyst said he was staggered by its size. However it was defended by Sir Peter who said the incentive was "fair for a very difficult job," given the risks.

10% of ITV companies held by US institutions

By Raymond Snoddy

US INSTITUTIONS hold a stake of around 10 per cent in the ITV companies, according to a new survey of who owns what in the UK's commercial television sector.

The biggest individual investor is Chase with significant stakes in Central, London Weekend Television and Scottish Fidelity, is the second largest US holder in ITV, owning more than 3 per cent of the stand alone ITV companies.

The other two main US investors are Warburg Pincus with an 8.31 per cent stake in LWT and Hanover Manufacturers which had 4.19 per cent also in LWT.

The extent of the US involvement is detailed in Citywatch, a new sharewatch service launched by Investor Communications & Research, part of London-based consultants GAH.

The Citywatch survey of institutional ownership in the ITV sector is the latest to be produced by GAH. The consultants have already researched areas such as the food, retailing and stores sectors.

The report shows that Mercury Asset Management is by far the largest individual investor in ITV accounting for a total of 8.69 per cent of the stand alone companies. It is strong in the companies which would be the main takeover targets if present rules are relaxed - Central, LWT, Scottish and Anglia. Prudential Portfolio Managers, the sector's second largest investor, is backing a similar range of companies.

Phillips & Drew Fund Management is also a significant player, but its largest investment is in HTV - a 23.04 per cent stake. The BBC pension fund is also an investor in ITV and holds a 3.83 per cent stake in Anglia Television.

Mr James Redhead, of GAH, said he saw the research as "a key defence tool" for ITV companies trying to ward off unwelcome predators. "It is also going to be of great value to foreign predators," he said.



Cliveden to seek public listing

THE CLIVEDEN Group, which runs the Buckinghamshire country house as a hotel, (pictured above), is to seek a public listing after reversing into Ifco, a former insurance broker. The house and gardens were donated by the Astar family to the National Trust in 1942. Granted an 80-year lease by the NT, the Cliveden Group have spent some £12m refurbishing the house. The company made a 66.8 per cent occupancy rate and £207 a night average charge on the 31 bedrooms in the financial year to last October. It made an operating profit of £427,000 on turnover of £3.83m but reported a retained loss of £456,000. Ifco, which became a shell company after selling its insurance broking businesses in 1991, hopes to regain its listing once the transaction has been completed.

Banner Homes to buy BES companies

BANNER HOMES, the USM-quoted property trading and development group, is acquiring two BES housebuilding companies, Housebuilding Portfolio One and Housebuilding Portfolio Two, which it launched in 1990. Banner owns 10.7 per cent of their share cap-

ital and has managed them from inception. Banner has also announced pre-tax profits of £255,000 for the year to March 31, compared with losses of £888,000. Turnover was slightly lower at £5.63m (£6.83m). Had the two companies been

part of the group as at March 31, they would have increased turnover by about 30 per cent. Their combined sales for the year were £1.81m and pre-tax profits £33,000. Net assets at March 31 amounted to £739,000. Earnings per share came through at 2p (losses 3.9p).

BIDDER/INVESTOR	TARGET	SECTOR	VALUE	COMMENT
ABN Amro (Netherlands)	Cragin Financial Corp (US)	Banking	£333m	Expanding Chicago presence
National Power (UK)	Transco Energy Ventures (US)	Power	£108m	Biggest overseas move yet
Sidew (UK)	Courtauld Flexible Pkg (UK/France/Spain/Nethl)	Packaging	£70m	European strategy move
Cummins Engine (US)/Tatco (India)	Joint venture	Engineering	£33m	Investment in India growing
Ora (Netherlands)	SLO Tuusula Kone (Finland)	Electrical wholesaling	£16.3m	Nokia refocusing move
National Express (UK)	Euroline Nederland (Netherlands)	Transport	£1.43m	Cash deal
Nyrex (US)	Shet Helios Telecommunications (Greece)	Telecoms	n/a	Italy's Stet sells 20% stake
Sinif Fibre (Italy)/Rhône Poulenc (France)	Joint venture	Textiles	n/a	Sector restructuring continues
AMC (S Africa)/Oswego (S Korea)	Oswego-Amc (JV)	Consumer goods	n/a	SA market development venture
BOC Group (UK)	Höls (Germany)	Gas distribution	n/a	Strategic cash deal

Europa poised to move back into the black

By Kenneth Gooding, Mining Correspondent

EUROPA MINERALS, the UK mining finance house which has been refinanced and restructured, broke even in the opening quarter.

And it will return to pre-tax profit for the first time since 1989 in the half year to July 30, said Sir David Hardy, chairman, at the annual meeting.

He would not forecast the full-year result and said Europa, which has gold and coal mining interests in Australia as well as drawing royalties from North Sea and Indonesian oil, had a long way to go before paying dividends.

Sir David confirmed that consideration was being given to a three-sided restructuring to pull together Europa and Austmin, the small Australian mining company which is Europa's main shareholder with 19.8 per cent, and Burmine, the Australian gold producer of

which Europa holds 41.8 per cent.

This would result in a group with a market capital of about A\$40m, quoted and with interests primarily in Australia but also with a London listing. This would "make it more simple for shareholders to see what they own."

But Sir David stressed that any restructuring would be very complex to work out, and was "an idea being explored, no more than that."

An 8 per cent stake in Europa, left with Australian sub-underwriters after a poorly-received rights issue of shares a year ago, was acquired recently by Mt Edon, another small Australian gold group backed by Swiss money.

Henry Ansbacher, the merchant bank which underwrote the issue, was left with 13.8 per cent of Europa. Mr Edward Schneider of Ansbacher said it was being treated as a long-term investment.

Gieves placing and open offer to raise £1.8m

HAVING BREACHED covenants on convertible loan stock and borrowing restrictions, Gieves Group is raising £1.8m net in a placing and open offer to remedy the situation.

The group, now operating as retailers and licensors and publishers, is placing 8.2m shares with USI Holdings group, which speaks for 5.1 per cent of the capital and all of the loan stock, and with Thistle Nominees on behalf of Mr George Ljutikov, a private investor holding 9.9 per cent of the capital.

Shareholders can claw back on the basis of 3-for-5 at 25p per share. USI will not request the immediate repayment of the loan stock in return for certain adjustments to the terms.

At the end of the year to January 31 1993 the loss retained in the business had risen from £3.8m to £4.75m. For the 12 months pre-tax deficit came to £1.41m (£1.51m), including exceptional charges

of £1.34m (£1.71m).

The exceptionals were made up of £810,000 for the closure of the Gieves & Hawkes operation in Milan and two retail outlets in the UK, £471,000 for restructuring and reorganisation costs for Chivers' publishing divisions in the UK and US, and £53,000 for net property liabilities.

On top of that were extraordinary charges of £3.47m (£2.28m). These comprised £1.78m adjustment for goodwill previously written off against reserves, £998,000 provisions and asset write-offs principally for the Milan stores, £815,000 profit on the sale of Bookpoint, and £1.5m in respect of the crystallisation of contingent liabilities relating to Redwood Press.

In respect of the latter, the principal guaranteed parties have conditionally agreed to subscribe for 900,000 shares at 35p in part settlement of the amounts owed.

Mr Roger Myers, chairman, said: "The Rouge concept still has great scope for expansion throughout the UK and we are actively looking for new sites." Last year saw rapid growth, with turnover, profit and overall development all reaching record levels.

Since the year-end Pelican had purchased the Yankee Noodle group of restaurants which brought with them Mr Robert Earl, who is behind the Planet Hollywood

chain, as a non-executive director. At the same time the group raised £4m in a placing with clawback, for working capital and to clear gearing.

The Leadenthall Wine Bar and the Cafe Pelican made a reduced contribution because of the recession.

Interest payments fell to £345,000 (£409,000) reflecting the drop in UK interest rates. The dividend is increased to 1.1p (1p) out of earnings per share of 4p (3p).

New outlets help Pelican rise to £908,000

By Catherine Milton

THE PELICAN Group of restaurants doubled pre-tax profits from £453,000 to £908,000 in the year to end-March, helped by the opening of eight new outlets.

Turnover rose to £8.06m (£6.23m), bolstered by the continued expansion of the Cafe Rouge chain, which now comprises a total of 14 open and two in development. The group now operated 20 restaurants.

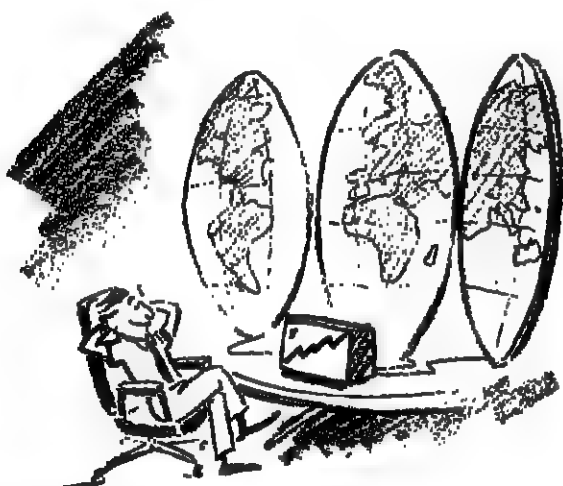
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of All Outstanding

TOSCO INTERNATIONAL FINANCE N.V.

U.S.\$50,000,000 - 8% Convertible Subordinated Debentures Due 1995
Redemption Date: August 13, 1993

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that, pursuant to the terms of the 8% Convertible Subordinated Debentures (the "Debentures") dated as of October 15, 1980, between Tosco International Finance N.V. (the "Company") and Morgan Guaranty Trust Company of New York, as Trustee (the "Trustee"), the Company has called for redemption and will redeem on August 13, 1993 (the "Redemption Date") all of its 8% Convertible Subordinated Debentures Due 1995 (the "Debentures") outstanding on the Redemption Date. As set forth in the Indenture, the redemption price will be U.S.\$1,000 per U.S.\$1,000 principal amount of Debentures to be redeemed plus U.S.\$66.22 representing accrued interest from October 15, 1992 to the Redemption Date, for a total redemption price (the "Redemption Price") of U.S.\$1,066.22. Payment will be made on or after the Redemption Date, after which the Debentures will cease to accrue interest.

To receive the Redemption Price for any Debentures, the holder thereof must present and surrender such Debentures, together with all unattached coupons appertaining thereto maturing after the Redemption Date, to the Trustee or any of the Paying Agents at the addresses set forth below. The amount of any missing unattached coupons will be deducted from the Redemption Price, or such deduction may be waived by the Company, the Guarantor and the Trustee if such security or indemnity is furnished to them as they may require. On or after the Redemption Date, payment will be made by check, drawn on, or by transfer to a United States dollar account maintained by the payee with a bank in the city of New York.

THE RIGHT TO CONVERT INTO COMMON STOCK OF TOSCO CORPORATION EXPIRES ON AUGUST 6, 1993.

The Debentures are convertible at the Holder's option at any time prior to the close of business on August 6, 1993 (the "Conversion Expiration Time") into shares of Common Stock, par value U.S.\$0.75 per share of Tosco Corporation (the "Common Stock"). Upon conversion, Holders would receive the number of shares that results from dividing the principal amount of Debentures held plus accrued interest through the date of conversion by the conversion price of U.S.\$186.875. Each U.S.\$1,000 principal amount of Debentures is, therefore, convertible into 5.351705 shares of Common Stock plus additional shares (at the same price) representing accrued interest through the date of conversion. The number of such shares into which a Debenture, in order to convert, Debentures into shares of Common Stock, the Debentures must be presented and surrendered to the Trustee or conversion agents set forth below, accompanied by written notice of conversion substantially in the form set forth in Section 206 of the Indenture, executed by the Holder of such Debenture and with any transfer taxes payable pursuant to Section 1108. Such notice shall also state the name or names and addresses in which the certificate or certificates for the shares of Common Stock issuable or deliverable on such conversion shall be registered.

On June 11, 1993, the last reported sale price of shares of Common Stock on the New York Stock Exchange Composite Tape was U.S.\$21.25 per share. Based on such sale price, the market value of the number of shares of Common Stock into which each U.S.\$1,000 principal amount of Debenture (plus accrued interest through August 13, 1993) would have been convertible was U.S.\$120.63 plus a cash payment of U.S.\$17.02 in respect of a fraction of a share. Such value will be affected by changes in the market value of shares of Common Stock.

Presentation and surrender of the Debentures for redemption or conversion may be made at the offices of the Trustee, Morgan Guaranty Trust Company of New York, Attention: Corporate Trust Operations Department, Traders and Mail Unit, 55 Exchange Place, Basement A, New York, New York 10260-0023 or at the main offices of the Paying Agents or Conversion Agents at Morgan Guaranty Trust Company of New York, Rue de la Regence 3, B-1000, Brussels; Mainzer Landstrasse 46, 6060 Frankfurt-am-Main 1; 60 Victoria Embankment, London, EC4Y 3DF; 11 Place Vendôme, 75001, Paris and Stockholmstrasse 38, 8022 Zurich; and at ABN AMRO Bank N.V., Vijzelstraat 79B, 1017 JH, Amsterdam; Banque Paribas, 3 Rue d'Antin, 75002, Paris; Swiss Bank Corporation, 1, Avenue des Capucins, CH-1002, Basel; and Banque Generale du Luxembourg S.A., 27 Avenue Montebello, Luxembourg.

In the event that Holders have any questions with respect to the procedures for conversion of their Debentures or surrendering their Debentures for redemption, please contact Mr. Wilkes McClure, (203) 977-1000.

TOSCO INTERNATIONAL FINANCE N.V.

By: Morgan Guaranty Trust Company of New York as Trustee

Dated: July 12, 1993

290,000,000
BBH International
Finance PLC
Guaranteed Secured Floating
Rate Notes due 1995

For the period from July 4, 1993 to October 3, 1993 the Notes will carry an interest rate of 8.5% per annum with an interest amount of £1,050.50 per £100,000 and of £18,082.40 per £1,000,000.

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Interest Amount per Y50,000,000 nominal due 11.1.1994: Y1,222,466

Agent Bank:
The Long-Term Credit Bank of Japan, Limited
Tokyo

Alcoa drops 21% as aluminium prices decline

By Martin Dickson
in New York

ALUMINUM Company of America, the world's biggest aluminium producer, has reported a 21 per cent drop in second-quarter net income before special charges.

The figures come against a backdrop of high world aluminium stocks and low prices, due to a large increase of imports to the West from the former Soviet Union.

At the end of last month, Mr Paul O'Neill, chairman of Alcoa, announced that the company was cutting its annual primary production in the US by almost 25 per cent, and laying off 750 people.

The second-quarter figures, released on Friday, showed earnings of \$4.7m, or 31 cents a share, before \$8.4m of net unfavourable adjustments. Sales and operating revenues were little changed at \$2.4bn.

The adjustments included a special charge of \$23.8m after tax for job cuts; a charge of \$11.9m for a new three-year labour agreement; and a \$26.3m Australian tax credit.

In the second quarter of last year the company reported earnings of \$56.5m, or 85 cents a share, be-



Paul O'Neill: announced 25% cut in primary production

fore charges of \$104.7m. The company said prices on most products had declined from the same quarter of last year.

Revenues were level, in spite of a 5 per cent decline in aluminium shipments, because of increased sales in non-aluminium products.

For the first six months of the year Alcoa reported net income of \$72.3m, or 82 cents a share, before adjustments, compared to \$111.6m, or \$1.29 a share, on the same basis in 1992.

Swissair wins strong terms on aircraft sale

By Ian Rodger in Zurich

SWISSAIR has sold six of its 23 MD-81 aircraft on very favourable terms, Mr Otto Loeper, the Swiss national airline's chief executive, said yesterday.

No figures were given. Swissair is frequently in the used aircraft market and aims to keep a modern fleet. In the past two years, proceeds from sales have prevented the airline from making losses.

Mr Loeper, speaking to the airline's annual managers' meeting in Zurich, said the Alcazar project, under which Swissair would join forces with KLM Royal Dutch Airlines, Scandinavian Airlines System and Austrian Airlines, was the best way forward for the company. It said a memorandum of agreement was expected to be signed by the airlines in September.

If the deal goes ahead, the four carriers would shed 10 per cent of their workforces, Mr Loeper said. This would require Swissair to make some of its 25,900 staff redundant, but the workforce was falling by 5.3 per cent annually through natural attrition.

Bronfman empire makes further disposals

By Bernard Simon in Toronto

THE troubled business empire controlled by Toronto's Bronfman family is making further disposals, selling its controlling interest in Consumers Packaging, Canada's biggest glass container maker, as well as a 50 per cent stake in a British Columbia paper mill.

Consolidated Enfield, a Bronfman-controlled company, will receive C\$9.7m (US\$7.5m) for its 58 per cent stake in Consumers from the owners of

Glenshaw Glass, a privately-held US glass maker based in Pittsburgh. Glenshaw has agreed to invest an unspecified amount in Consumers and to keep all its seven plants in operation.

Separately, Noranda Forest, which is also controlled by the Bronfmans, has sold its 50 per cent stake in Island Paper Mills, which makes coated and uncoated papers, to EB Eddy, a Canadian forest products group.

Eddy has bought the remain-

ing 50 per cent from MacMillan Bloedel of Vancouver. Terms were not disclosed.

The purchase price for Consumers of 85 cents a share is less than half the current market price, and reflects the company's fragile financial condition.

Losses over the past five years have totalled C\$229m, and Consumers is in default on a considerable portion of its bank debt and debentures. It is in the middle of a financial and business restructuring, which

included the sale earlier this year of its plastics packaging interests.

Mr Brian Lawson, Enfield's president, said a fresh owner "committed to injecting new capital and providing strategic support" greatly improves Consumers prospects. The company has a market share of roughly 70 per cent, with 1992 sales of C\$410m.

Consumers and Island Paper are the latest in a string of asset disposals by companies in the Bronfman orbit. Others

sold this year include controlling interests in MacMillan Bloedel, the west coast forestry group; John Labatt, the beer and entertainment group; and Royal Trust, Canada's second-biggest trust and loan company.

The convoluted structure of the Bronfman group, which includes several private holding companies, makes it hard for outsiders to estimate the extent of its financial difficulties which led to the spate of asset sales.

Swiss banks lifted by first-half improvements

By Ian Rodger

FIRST-HALF results from three medium-sized Swiss banks underpin expectations of a banner year in prospect for the industry.

BZ Bank, the Zurich securities house headed by Mr Martin Ebner, reports first-half net income of SFr49.9m (\$35.6m), not far from the SFr55.5m earned in the whole of last year.

It was the first time BZ, which is privately held, reported interim results and no comparative figures were given.

Last week, Banca del Gottardo, the Lugano based bank controlled by Japan's Sumi-

tomo Bank, said cash flow rose 22 per cent to SFr61.4m in the first half.

While two weeks ago, Julius Baer, another Zurich banking group, said its first-half net profit was about SFr70m, slightly higher than the figure for the whole of last year.

Lower interest rates, a buoyant local stock market, big new inflows of investment funds and controlled costs are the factors contributing to these results.

The Swiss stock market's all-share index is up 22 per cent since the beginning of the year, enabling banks to make large gains in trading and commission income.

Baer said its trading income

more than doubled in the first half. Gottardo said stock trading and new issue commission income was up 30 per cent while BZ's securities related income, at SFr50.9m, was 28 per cent above the figure for the whole of last year.

Baer, which specialises in asset management, said its commission income from this business was up 20 per cent. Also, clients' assets grew by about 10 per cent in the first six months and total SFr36bn.

Analysts said funds had been pouring into Switzerland this year, partly because of continuing turbulence in exchange rates in other European countries.

Mr Bernhard Tschanz, head of investment research at Credit Suisse, said Switzerland's decision last December to stay out of the European Economic Area helped.

Baer's net interest income gained 10 per cent, reflecting widening spreads as interest rates fell.

The big three Swiss universal banks, Union Bank of Switzerland, Swiss Bank Corporation and Credit Suisse, are the main beneficiaries of this trend, and they are all expected to report sharply higher first-half profits.

Most banks are benefiting from two years of aggressive internal cost cutting. Baer's expenses in the first half were

up only 6 per cent while Gottardo's declined.

Berliner Bank has acquired Deutsche Spar- und Kreditbank (DSK Bank) from DSK's sole shareholder, Mr August von Finck, the Munich-based investor, Reuter reports.

No terms were provided. German press reports have recently estimated value on the deal at up to DM200m (\$125m). DSK operations are focused on private customer business.

The bank has 25 branches, most of them in the Munich area.

DSK had 1992 net profits of DM7.03m. Its balance sheet total was DM2.03bn.

Akai loss widens to Y941m at half-way

By Michio Nakamoto in Tokyo

AKAI Electric, the Japanese maker of video and audio equipment, suffered a pre-tax loss of Y941m (\$8.8m) in the half-year ended May 20, reflecting the continuing sluggish state of the consumer electronics market.

The loss, significantly larger than the Y623m deficit of the same period a year ago, came on sales of Y25bn, an increase of 2.3 per cent on the previous first half.

Sluggish sales of video cassette recorders, particularly in Europe where Akai has a strong foothold, the impact of the yen's rise and increased competition were blamed for the disappointing performance. Akai has an export ratio of 85 per cent and increased sales in all regions except Europe

where they fell by 13 per cent. Video equipment suffered a 4 per cent decline in sales while audio equipment saw sales grow by 27 per cent.

Akai forecast pre-tax losses would increase sharply in the year to November 20 because of the depressed market conditions and the yen's rise against the dollar this year.

It expects losses of Y1.3bn, compared with the previous Y247m. This will be the second straight year of losses for Akai, which had initially expected to post a pre-tax profit of Y300m in the current year.

The group hopes to combat the impact of the yen's rise with price rises, an increase in overseas production and in the procurement of parts from overseas. However, it believes sales of VCRs will continue to decline through the year.

Argentina sells energy group in three units

By John Bertram
in Buenos Aires

ARGENTINA has completed the privatisation of its principal energy companies with the sale of Hidronor, the country's principal hydroelectricity generator for \$1.1bn.

The sale follows last month's successful flotation of YPF, the national oil company, and last year's privatisation of the federally-held gas and electricity companies. In just 15 months, Argentina's energy privatisations have raised more than \$6.5bn.

The government split Hidronor into three parts, selling each as a separate unit. Three international consortia paid \$474.6m in cash and took on a further \$631.1m in financial liabilities from the government. Hidronor's dams have been

transferred as 30-year concessions.

The sale last week of El Chocón, the largest of the dams, for \$519.3m to a consortium led by Endesa of Chile, was particularly significant. Argentina and Chile have long been fierce rivals.

El Chocón is located close to the Chilean border in the southern Andes and is a large source of electricity for Argentina. Last year, Endesa acquired generating and distribution companies in greater Buenos Aires.

A consortium headed by Southern Electric of the US paid \$593.5m for the Alcora dam. Another consortium comprising Dominion Energy, also of the US, and Louis Dreyfus, the international commodity trader, paid \$192.9m for the smaller Cerros Colorado dam.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Southern Union gas acquisition

WESTERN Resources of the US is to sell its Missouri natural gas properties and operations to Southern Union for about \$360m. Reuter reports. Southern Union will fund the purchase through a debt offering and a rights issue of common stock.

The natural gas properties serve about 460,000 Missouri customers in areas including Kansas City, Joplin and St. Joseph.

The deal hinges on approvals from the Missouri Public Service Commission and other regulatory agencies, Western Resources said.

Bank of Bermuda Group has agreed to acquire the institutional trust business of Standard Chartered Bank's Equitor Group in Hong Kong and Singapore, increasing its Asia Pacific assets to about US\$7bn, Reuter reports.

Standard Chartered Equitor has about US\$3bn of institutional assets, and Bank of Bermuda has US\$4bn in assets in the area, the bank said.

The acquisition raises total funds under administration to

more than US\$28bn from US\$25bn, the bank said.

An initial public offering of shares in Woolworths the Australian retailer has closed heavily oversubscribed, Reuter reports. Woolworths offered 1bn shares at A\$2.45 each. Investors applied for 2.67bn shares, more than 2 1/2 times the number available.

Domestic institutions applied for 875m shares, but were allocated 153m. Overseas institutions requested 772m shares. They got 40m.

Woolworths, which is not related to the US group Woolworth, has allocated shares to 339,000 investors. That gives it the biggest shareholder base of any listed Australian company.

Saudi American Bank, which is 30 per cent owned by Citibank of the US, improved first-half net profits by 5.3 per cent to SR470.6m (\$127.5m), compared with the year-earlier period, AP-DJ reports.

Operating income was little changed at SR465.5m. However, the bank recorded a SR5.1m surplus in debt recovery compared with a SR17m provision against bad debts a year earlier.



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WARRANT BOND	Yield to redemption of the bid-price. Amount issued is expressed in millions of currency units.	05/08/97	7%	+4	85.52
FLOATING RATE NOTES	\$US dollars unless indicated. Margin above six-month offered rate for US dollars. Copon-current coupon.				
CONVERTIBLE BONDS	\$US dollars unless indicated. Prem-premium percentage premium of the current effective price of buying shares via the bond over the most recent share price.				
WARRANTS	Equity warrant prem-premium over current share price. Bond warrant ex-yld-spread yield at current warrant price.				


Closing prices on July 11


U.S. \$200,000,000
American Express Bank Ltd.
Floating Rate Subordinated Capital Notes
Due 1999

Notice is hereby given that for the Interest Period 13th July, 1993 to 13th October, 1993 the Notes will bear interest at the rate of 3¼% per annum. The interest payable on 13th October, 1993 against Coupon No. 28 will be U.S. \$67.66 per U.S. \$10,000 Nominal and U.S. \$2,198.19 per U.S. \$250,000 Nominal.

DATED THIS 12TH DAY OF JULY, 1992.

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WARRANT BOND	Yield to redemption of the bid-price. Amount issued is expressed in millions of currency units.	05/08/97	7%	+4	85.52
FLOATING RATE NOTES	\$US dollars unless indicated. Margin above six-month offered rate for US dollars. Copon-current coupon.				
CONVERTIBLE BONDS	\$US dollars unless indicated. Prem-premium percentage premium of the current effective price of buying shares via the bond over the most recent share price.				
WARRANTS	Equity warrant prem-premium over current share price. Bond warrant ex-yld-spread yield at current warrant price.				

Closing prices on July 11, 1996

INTERNATIONAL CAPITAL MARKETS

INTERNATIONAL BONDS

Swiss tranquillity disturbed by a quiet revolution

AMONG European bond markets, few have escaped bouts of currency-related or politically inspired turbulence over the past year. However, unlike members of the European exchange rate mechanism, Switzerland's tranquillity has been disturbed by a quiet revolution taking place in the Swiss franc bond market.

In recent months, the changes which have taken place in this corner of Europe - regulations governing the market and the issuance of larger, more liquid issues - appear to be creating a more enticing market for borrowers of a sovereign and supranational nature. At the same time, a change in the economic background has made it more likely to encourage investors to buy bonds and for borrowers to launch longer-dated issues.

A recent report by Ms Caroline Shah, an analyst at Standard & Poor's, the international credit rating agency, points out that the volume of bond issuance in the Swiss franc bond market has dwindled in

recent years, as the market was "hampered by slow liberalisation" and left behind as other countries liberalised their currency markets.

According to figures provided by Euromoney Bondware, the volume of public and private Swiss franc bonds for foreign issuers declined from a total of Sfr32.7bn in 1990, to Sfr 29.9bn in 1991 and Sfr 27.8bn in 1992. Yet in the first six months of 1993, the volume of new issues has topped Sfr18.5bn, suggesting the market could be set to exceed the previous year's volume. But as Ms Shah says, "recent moves have begun to reverse that trend and... may pave the way for the development of a Swiss franc Euro-market". She points out that the Swiss franc market may have benefited from the sporadic bursts of turbulence in the European exchange rate mechanism.

The following four recent changes should help to lift the growth of the Swiss franc market:

- the abolition of stamp duty on the issue of Swiss franc

- bonds by non-Swiss issuers
- the abolition of stamp duty on inter-professional trading of foreign bonds, which had aggravated the illiquidity in the Swiss franc market
- the relaxing of syndication requirements, so that banks which are not domiciled in Switzerland are able to syndicate Swiss franc bonds issued by foreign borrowers
- new issue commissions and associated fees for borrowers have been reduced and are more evenly distributed.

According to S&P, the relaxation of the stamp duty on foreign issues should tempt more Swiss franc bond issues from foreign borrowers while the new syndication rules should help broaden the investor base outside Switzerland.

Yet, the pace of change could be slow. A bond analyst at Pictet, the Swiss investment house, says: "The liberalisations are bearing fruit... but it remains a small capital market with very few benchmark issues."

Some borrowers are taking note

of the changing environment. Last month the Republic of Austria established the benchmark bond in the Swiss franc market with the launch of its Sfr1bn bond due February 2000. The Kingdom of Sweden also tapped the market last month with a Sfr500m 10-year issue, its first foray in this market since 1988.

Austria's issue is particularly significant given that one of the most frequent complaints about the Swiss franc market is its poor liquidity. The market is dominated by Swiss retail investors who, once they have bought the bonds, tend to hold them to maturity. Small issues of about Sfr100-Sfr150m are placed and the liquidity dries up, forcing banks to quote wide bid-offer spreads thereafter.

Mr Ruedi Zehnder, head of primary markets at Credit Suisse, expects Swiss retail investor appetite for bonds to pick up now that inflation is coming down and short-term interest rates are declining. The Swiss bond yield curve has been inverse for the last three

years, so while investors could obtain high returns on bank deposit accounts, there was less incentive to buy lower-yielding bonds. However, with the fall in short-term rates, the curve has flattened out, and that appears to be triggering investor interest in the longer end of the curve.

Another positive factor according to one Swiss banker, is the likelihood that there will be some early redemptions of bonds with relatively high coupons this year, which should create investor demand for Swiss franc bonds.

For borrowers, Swiss interest rates appear relatively low by European standards, and some borrowers have been able to take advantage of attractive swap rates. However, Mr Zehnder is less optimistic about the investor base: "There is not a broad demand from outside Switzerland... we are changing but not as quickly as people thought we would change."

Sara Webb

RISK AND REWARD

Derivatives industry scrambles to find some kind of infrastructure



THE debate in world banking circles over controlling systemic risk from derivative securities trading will intensify when a study group formed by the Group of 30, a Washington-based think tank, releases its report on derivatives later this month.

Such studies are popular. Derivatives, in the span of just a few years, have become integral to corporate risk management, with a surprising array of business applications, from swapping long-term debt for short-term debt to hedging foreign exchange or commodities exposure. Regulators are just coming to terms with swaps, options, and hybrid instruments, and are wondering if, and how, such banking exotics should be supervised.

The banks which trade the markets are further along in managing derivatives. The industry has evolved to a point where standardised contracts and other procedures are helping to mitigate credit risks. Now, with the threat of regulatory intervention pending, the derivatives industry is scrambling to adopt an infrastructure of sorts, in order to prove that participating dealers have the growing markets under control.

Estimates of annual over-the-counter derivatives turnover range from \$5,000bn to \$7,000bn in terms of notional face value. However, since only the income streams from these securities are swapped, the capital at risk in each trade is smaller than the face value of the securities by at least a factor of 10. Ideas for managing credit exposure while at the same time allowing reasonable market access and a healthy measure of innovation range from a centralised derivatives clearing house to a more sophisticated generation of standardised bilateral swaps contracts.

Since credit quality is an important marketing tool for exchange clearing houses, big banks, and the newly-formed AAA credit-enhanced subsidiaries of big investment houses, the debate is coloured by the self-interest.

The central clearing house idea has attracted the support of some US banking regulators. A clearing house would guarantee both sides

of a swap and limit default risk. With the credit quality of counterparties less of an issue, a central clearing house would, in theory, open up swap market participation to less highly capitalised banks.

Chicago's two big futures exchanges would like a slice of the swaps clearing business, and are positioning themselves for a potential bonanza. "It's something we're considering," says Mr Jim Slanz, senior director of risk management applications for the Chicago Mercantile Exchange.

The Chicago Board of Trade is making a bid to clear swaps. Late last month, it asked its primary regulator, the Commodity Futures Trading Commission, to exempt markets traded only by professional traders from the constraints of federal oversight. Such an exemption, which has been granted to OTC swaps and off-exchange energy contracts, would allow the CBOE to compete against the OTC markets with its own non-standardised derivatives. However, it would also put the exchange in line to clear swaps and hybrid transactions.

The CBOE is a long way from achieving such an exemption. CFTC officials have opposed mingling the derivatives risks of large institutional traders in the same clearing house that protects the investments of small retail futures and options traders.

Mr Andrew Coleman, partner in Price Waterhouse's capital markets area, believes a separate "mega clearing-house" for OTC derivatives could be constructed, but that it would be expensive to establish.

He sees drawbacks: the procedures used to clear, or match, highly standardised futures trades in liquid exchange markets do not transfer easily to swaps, which are individually tailored to suit the needs of a single company and are usually difficult to re-sell.

The handful of specialist dealers trading swaps would prefer to avoid the expense and standardisation required by a clearing house and negotiate instead a series of bilateral agreements that reduce exposure in the event a partner in a swap defaults. Bilateral agreements allow them to preserve the marketing edge they garner from their AAA credit ratings.

Laurie Morse

NEW INTERNATIONAL BOND ISSUES

Borrower	Amount m.	Maturity	Coupon %	Price	Yield %	Launch spread bp	Book runner
US DOLLARS							
Selco Transportation Co. (b)	480	Jul 1997	1.375	100	-	-	Nomura International
NRK Insurance (b)	300	Jul 1997	1.275	100	-	-	Nikko Europe
Kingdom of Denmark	250	Aug 1997	4.75	99.58	4.885	+20 (b)	Nikko Europe
Bacard-Martini France	200	Jul 1998	5.75	99.58	5.854	+80 (54%+0)	JP Morgan Securities
Samitomo Cement Co. (b)	200	Jul 1997	1.375	100	-	-	Nomura International
Sanyang Oil Refining (b)	200	Dec 2000	3.75	100	-	-	Paribas Capital Markets
Barco Pacific	40	Jan 1998	8.25	99.53	8.480	+580 (b)	ING Bank
Credit Lyonnais (b)	100	Jul 1998	6.25	99.53	6.721	+43 (54%+0)	Cyprus
Japan Airlines Co.	250	Jul 2003	6.25	99.51	6.721	+43 (54%+0)	Chase/Lehman Brothers
Republic of Argentina	150	Aug 1998	8.25	99.51	8.800	+255 (54%+0)	Chase/Lehman Brothers
Republic of Argentina	100	Aug 2000	8.25	99.51	8.800	+255 (54%+0)	Chase/Lehman Brothers
Mitsubishi Oil Co. (b)	200	Jul 1997	1.375	100	-	-	Nikko Europe
State Bank of New York (b)	150	Jul 1998	1.375	100	-	-	Morgan Stanley Intl.
Grupo ISA	150	Jul 1998	1.375	100	-	-	Goldman Sachs Intl.
Credit Lyonnais (b)	250	Jul 1998	6.25	99.51	6.721	+43 (54%+0)	Cyprus
Aracruz Celulose (b)	80	Jul 1998	9.0	99.78	9.791	+450 (54%+0)	Cyprus
D-MARKS							
Arbed (b)	192.5	Jul 2003	2.5	72.724	-	-	Merrill Lynch Bank
Lynx, Indonesia (b)	100	Aug 2003	2.0	100	-	-	Thomson & Burroughs
Alterra Finance, Netherlands	100	Aug 2000	7.125	101.5	8.848	-	Drescher Bank
STERLING							
Ledra Group	125	Aug 2003	8.75	99.083	9.018	+127 (54%+0)	Berleys de Zoete Weid
National Bank of Hungary	100	Aug 2003	10	97.69	10.387	+260 (54%+0)	JP Morgan Securities
Foris (b)	70	Jul 1998	9.0	100	-	-	Merrill Lynch Intl.
FRENCH FRANCS							
Koninklijke Electric Power Co. (b)	2.5bn	Aug 2003	7	98.73	7.030	+38 (54%+0)	Paribas
Renault	1.5bn	Aug 2002	7.25	98.25	7.300	+55 (54%+0)	Société Générale
Bank of Greece	1bn	Aug 1998	7.5	98.35	7.680	+140 (54%+0)	BNP Paribas
Soc. Gen. Acceptance (b)	500	Aug 2001	5.75	99.51	6.281	+37 (54%+0)	Société Générale
Soc. Nationale Elf Aquitaine	1bn	Aug 2003	7.125	98.48	7.200	+39 (54%+0)	OCF
YEN							
Mitsubishi Oil Co. (b)	300	Sep 2000	9.0	100	-	-	Yamashita Intl. (Europe)
Hankyu Dept. Stores (b)	150	Sep 2000	9.0	100	-	-	Deutsche Europe
Tokai Standard Co. (b)	100	Mar 1998	1.625	100	-	-	Nikko Europe
CANADIAN DOLLARS							
Province of Ontario (b)	1.25bn	Dec 2003	7.75	98.128	8.02	+70 (54%+0)	Merrill Lynch Intl.
Kingdom of Denmark	250	Jul 1997	4.75	99.58	4.885	+20 (b)	Nikko Europe
SOAE	125	Aug 2003	8.125	98.84	8.392	+80 (54%+0)	ScottsMcLeod

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NOTICE OF REDEMPTION
To Holders of

6 1/2% Convertible Debentures Due 2003

The Goodyear Tire & Rubber Company

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that, in accordance with the provisions of that certain Indenture, dated as of July 7, 1994 (the "Indenture"), between The Goodyear Tire & Rubber Company ("Goodyear") and Chemical Bank, the successor by merger to Manufacturers Hanover Trust Company, as Trustee (the "Trustee"), pursuant to which Goodyear issued US\$100,000,000 in principal amount of 6 1/2% Convertible Debentures Due 2003 (the "Debentures"), each a "Debenture":

- All of the outstanding Debentures will be redeemed by Goodyear on August 15, 1998 (the "Redemption Date") at a redemption price of 101% of the principal amount of each Debenture (the "Redemption Price"). Together with accrued interest of 6 1/2% on the principal amount of each Debenture from July 7, 1994 to, but not including, the Redemption Date, which accrued interest will be equal to US\$8.16 per US\$100.00 principal amount of Debenture. The total amount payable on the Redemption Date, including the Redemption Price and accrued interest, will be US\$108.16 per Debenture.
- On the Redemption Date, the Redemption Price and accrued interest (as specified above) will be due and payable on each Debenture upon the surrender thereof, together with all coupons representing interest which mature after the Redemption Date, to any of the Paying Agents at the locations specified below. If any Debenture is presented for redemption or conversion shall not be accompanied by all appropriate coupons maturing after the Redemption Date, the Redemption Price for such Debenture will be reduced by an amount equal to the face amount of all such maturing coupons.
- Interest shall cease to accrue on all of the Debentures on and after the Redemption Date.
- The Debentures may be converted into the Common Stock of Goodyear ("Goodyear Common Stock") at a Conversion Price equal to US\$40.15 (representing principal amount of Debenture for each share of Goodyear Common Stock then outstanding) on the Redemption Date. At the date of issuance on the Redemption Date the right to convert the Debentures will terminate.
- The Debenture may be surrendered for redemption or conversion into Goodyear Common Stock to any of the following Paying and Conversion Agents at the following locations:

Chemical Bank
 (Formerly Manufacturers Hanover Trust Company)
 100 Strand
 London WC2R 1ES
 England
 Credit Suisse
 8 Parakylas
 CH-4001 Zurich
 Switzerland
 Banque Paribas
 Avenue de la Libération
 B-1050 Brussels
 Belgium
 Credit Suisse S.A. Luxembourg
 45 Boulevard Royal
 L-1015 Luxembourg
 The Grand Duchy of Luxembourg
 The Goodyear Tire & Rubber Company

July 12, 1993



\$500,000,000

Petroleum Nasional Berhad

(Incorporated in Malaysia with limited liability)

6 1/2% Notes Due 2003

Salomon Brothers Inc.

Lehman Brothers

J.P. Morgan Securities Inc.

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Standard Chartered

Standard Chartered PLC

US\$400,000,000 Undated Primary Capital Floating Rate Notes

In accordance with the provisions of the Notes, notice is hereby given that for the Interest Determination period from 12th July 1993 to 12th August 1993 the Notes will carry interest at the rate of 3.625 per cent per annum.

Interest accrued to 12th August 1993 and payable on 12th January 1994 will amount to US\$31.22 per US\$10,000 Note and US\$312.15 per US\$100,000 Note.

West Merchant Bank Limited
 Agent Bank

Standard Chartered

Standard Chartered PLC

US\$300,000,000 Undated Primary Capital Floating Rate Notes (Series 4)

(of which US\$200,000,000 has been issued as the Initial Tranche)

In accordance with the provisions of the Notes, notice is hereby given that for the six month period, (184 days), from 12th July 1993 to 12th January 1994 the Notes will carry interest at the rate of 3.65 per cent per annum.

Interest payable on 12th January 1994 will amount to US\$186.56 per US\$10,000 Note and US\$1,865.56 per US\$100,000 Note.

West Merchant Bank Limited
 Agent Bank

Notice to Holders of Warrants
 to subscribe for shares of common stock of

Yamamura Glass Co., Ltd.

issued in conjunction with

U.S. \$100,000,000

4 per cent. Guaranteed Notes due 1995

Notice is hereby given in connection with the captioned warrants (the "Warrants") as follows:
 The average of the closing prices of shares ("Shares") of common stock of Yamamura Glass Co., Ltd. (the "Company") on the Tokyo Stock Exchange for the five consecutive trading days up to and including 9th July, 1993, when multiplied by 1.025 and rounded upward to the nearest yen, was ¥772 per Share and was less than the Subscription Price of the Warrants in effect on such day by not less than ¥1, and consequently the Subscription Price of the Warrants is required to be revised downward pursuant to the provisions of Condition (2) (A) of the Terms and Conditions of the Warrants.

As a result, the Subscription Price of the Warrants which is currently ¥925 per Share will be revised downward to ¥772 per Share with effect from 26th July, 1993, Japan time.

Yamamura Glass Co., Ltd.
 By: The Mitsubishi Trust and Banking Corporation,
 London Branch
 as Principal Paying Agent

Dated: 12th July, 1993

FRANCE

50

High	Low
1997	2000

	July 19	July 20
July 19	2000	2000

	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031	2032	2033	2034	2035	2036	2037	2038	2039	2040	2041	2042	2043	2044	2045	2046	2047	2048	2049	2050	2051	2052	2053	2054	2055	2056	2057	2058	2059	2060	2061	2062	2063	2064	2065	2066	2067	2068	2069	2070	2071	2072	2073	2074	2075	2076	2077	2078	2079	2080	2081	2082	2083	2084	2085	2086	2087	2088	2089	2090	2091	2092	2093	2094	2095	2096	2097	2098	2099	2100	2101	2102	2103	2104	2105	2106	2107	2108	2109	2110	2111	2112	2113	2114	2115	2116	2117	2118	2119	2120	2121	2122	2123	2124	2125	2126	2127	2128	2129	2130	2131	2132	2133	2134	2135	2136	2137	2138	2139	2140	2141	2142	2143	2144	2145	2146	2147	2148	2149	2150	2151	2152	2153	2154	2155	2156	2157	2158	2159	2160	2161	2162	2163	2164	2165	2166	2167	2168	2169	2170	2171	2172	2173	2174	2175	2176	2177	2178	2179	2180	2181	2182	2183	2184	2185	2186	2187	2188	2189	2190	2191	2192	2193	2194	2195	2196	2197	2198	2199	2200	2201	2202	2203	2204	2205	2206	2207	2208	2209	2210	2211	2212	2213	2214	2215	2216	2217	2218	2219	2220	2221	2222	2223	2224	2225	2226	2227	2228	2229	2230	2231	2232	2233	2234	2235	2236	2237	2238	2239	2240	2241	2242	2243	2244	2245	2246	2247	2248	2249	2250	2251	2252	2253	2254	2255	2256	2257	2258	2259	2260	2261	2262	2263	2264	2265	2266	2267	2268	2269	2270	2271	2272	2273	2274	2275	2276	2277	2278	2279	2280	2281	2282	2283	2284	2285	2286	2287	2288	2289	2290	2291	2292	2293	2294	2295	2296	2297	2298	2299	2300	2301	2302	2303	2304	2305	2306	2307	2308	2309	2310	2311	2312	2313	2314	2315	2316	2317	2318	2319	2320	2321	2322	2323	2324	2325	2326	2327	2328	2329	2330	2331	2332	2333	2334	2335	2336	2337	2338	2339	2340	2341	2342	2343	2344	2345	2346	2347	2348	2349	2350	2351	2352	2353	2354	2355	2356	2357	2358	2359	2360	2361	2362	2363	2364	2365	2366	2367	2368	2369	2370	2371	2372	2373	2374	2375	2376	2377	2378	2379	2380	2381	2382	2383	2384	2385	2386	2387	2388	2389	2390	2391	2392	2393	2394	2395	2396	2397	2398	2399	2400	2401	2402	2403	2404	2405	2406	2407	2408	2409	2410	2411	2412	2413	2414	2415	2416	2417	2418	2419	2420	2421	2422	2423	2424	2425	2426	2427	2428	2429	2430	2431	2432	2433	2434	2435	2436	2437	2438	2439	2440	2441	2442	2443	2444	2445	2446	2447	2448	2449	2
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AMERICA	ALGERIA (M)	115.2	108.8	108.8	108.8	115.25 (97)	87.18 (207)
	ARGENTINA						
	Australia (M)	104.1	104.0	112.5	105.9	104.25 (98)	94.78 (171)
	USA (Central)	122.4		118.2	118.8	122.45 (97)	104.08 (117)
LOW							
87.45 (1)							
32.93 (21)							
17.95 (1)							
	THAILAND	468.47	4717.39	4688.38	4647.42	5013.23 (99)	2688.42 (81)
	THAILAND						
	Bangkok (M)	557.04	558.59	558.00	557.42	558.04 (297)	518.04 (148)
and Toronto							
and London							
	WORLD						

3,140	2,190
2,010	1,520

[illegible]

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1. *Phragmites australis* (Cav.) Trin. ex Steud.

[illegible]

5,420	5,670	Hino Motors	983	400	1,890	1,250	Shen-Cong Lim	1,031	1,512	STB	14.38
5,530	3,680	Hino Electric	980	490	1,150	250	Shengsi	1,030	1,275	STR	2.94
5,600		Hongkong	980	380	1,150	250	Shengsi	1,030	1,275	STR	2.94
5,630	5,700	Hongkong (Bank)	980	510	1,150	250	Shengsi	1,030	1,275	STR	2.94
5,670	5,700	Hongkong	980	510	1,150	250	Shengsi	1,030	1,275	STR	2.94
5,700	5,700	Hongkong	980	510	1,150	250	Shengsi	1,030	1,275	STR	2.94
5,730	5,700	Hongkong	980	510	1,150	250	Shengsi	1,030	1,275	STR	2.94
5,760	5,700	Hongkong	980	510	1,150	250	Shengsi	1,030	1,275	STR	2.94
5,790	5,700	Hongkong	980	510	1,150	250	Shengsi	1,030	1,275	STR	2.94
5,820	5,700	Hongkong	980	510	1,150	250	Shengsi	1,030	1,275	STR	2.94
5,850	5,700	Hongkong	980	510	1,150	250	Shengsi	1,030	1,275	STR	2.94
5,880	5,700	Hongkong	980	510	1,150	250	Shengsi	1,030	1,275	STR	2.94
5,910	5,700	Hongkong	980	510	1,150	250	Shengsi	1,030	1,275	STR	2.94
5,940	5,700	Hongkong	980	510	1,150	250	Shengsi	1,030	1,275	STR	2.94
5,970	5,700	Hongkong	980	510	1,150	250	Shengsi	1,030	1,275	STR	2.94
6,000	5,700	Hongkong	980	510	1,150	250	Shengsi	1,030	1,275	STR	2.94
6,030	5,700	Hongkong	980	510	1,150	250	Shengsi	1,030	1,275	STR	2.94
6,060	5,700	Hongkong	980	510	1,150	250	Shengsi	1,030	1,275	STR	2.94
6,090	5,700	Hongkong	980	510	1,150	250	Shengsi	1,030	1,275	STR	2.94
6,120	5,700	Hongkong	980	510	1,150	250	Shengsi	1,030	1,275	STR	2.94
6,150	5,700	Hongkong	980	510	1,150	250	Shengsi	1,030	1,275	STR	2.94
6,180	5,700	Hongkong	980	510	1,150	250	Shengsi	1,030	1,275	STR	2.94
6,210	5,700	Hongkong	980	510	1,150	250	Shengsi	1,030	1,275	STR	2.94
6,240	5,700	Hongkong	980	510	1,150	250	Shengsi	1,030	1,275	STR	2.94
6,270	5,700	Hongkong	980	510	1,150	250	Shengsi	1,030	1,275	STR	2.94
6,300	5,700	Hongkong	980	510	1,150	250	Shengsi	1,030	1,275	STR	2.94
6,330	5,700	Hongkong	980	510	1,150	250	Shengsi	1,030	1,275	STR	2.94
6,360	5,700	Hongkong	980	510	1,150	250	Shengsi	1,030	1,275	STR	2.94
6,390	5,700	Hongkong	980	510	1,150	250	Shengsi	1,030	1,275	STR	2.94
6,420	5,700	Hongkong	980	510	1,150	250	Shengsi	1,030	1,275	STR	2.94
6,450	5,700	Hongkong	980	510	1,150	250	Shengsi	1,030	1,275	STR	2.94
6,480	5,700	Hongkong	980	510	1,150	250	Shengsi	1,030	1,275	STR	2.94
6,510	5,700	Hongkong	980	510	1,150	250	Shengsi	1,030	1,275	STR	2.94
6,540	5,700	Hongkong	980	510	1,150	250	Shengsi	1,030	1,275	STR	2.94
6,570	5,700	Hongkong	980	510	1,150	250	Shengsi	1,030	1,275	STR	2.94
6,600	5,700	Hongkong	980	510	1,150	250	Shengsi	1,030	1,275	STR	2.94
6,630	5,700	Hongkong	980	510	1,150	250	Shengsi	1,030	1,275	STR	2.94
6,660	5,7										

1,150	1,200	1,250	1,300	1,350	1,400	1,450	1,500	1,550	1,600	1,650	1,700	1,750	1,800	1,850	1,900	1,950	2,000	2,050	2,100	2,150	2,200	2,250	2,300	2,350	2,400	2,450	2,500	2,550	2,600	2,650	2,700	2,750	2,800	2,850	2,900	2,950	3,000	3,050	3,100	3,150	3,200	3,250	3,300	3,350	3,400	3,450	3,500	3,550	3,600	3,650	3,700	3,750	3,800	3,850	3,900	3,950	4,000	4,050	4,100	4,150	4,200	4,250	4,300	4,350	4,400	4,450	4,500	4,550	4,600	4,650	4,700	4,750	4,800	4,850	4,900	4,950	5,000	5,050	5,100	5,150	5,200	5,250	5,300	5,350	5,400	5,450	5,500	5,550	5,600	5,650	5,700	5,750	5,800	5,850	5,900	5,950	6,000	6,050	6,100	6,150	6,200	6,250	6,300	6,350	6,400	6,450	6,500	6,550	6,600	6,650	6,700	6,750	6,800	6,850	6,900	6,950	7,000	7,050	7,100	7,150	7,200	7,250	7,300	7,350	7,400	7,450	7,500	7,550	7,600	7,650	7,700	7,750	7,800	7,850	7,900	7,950	8,000	8,050	8,100	8,150	8,200	8,250	8,300	8,350	8,400	8,450	8,500	8,550	8,600	8,650	8,700	8,750	8,800	8,850	8,900	8,950	9,000	9,050	9,100	9,150	9,200	9,250	9,300	9,350	9,400	9,450	9,500	9,550	9,600	9,650	9,700	9,750	9,800	9,850	9,900	9,950	10,000
1,150	1,200	1,250	1,300	1,350	1,400	1,450	1,500	1,550	1,600	1,650	1,700	1,750	1,800	1,850	1,900	1,950	2,000	2,050	2,100	2,150	2,200	2,250	2,300	2,350	2,400	2,450	2,500	2,550	2,600	2,650	2,700	2,750	2,800	2,850	2,900	2,950	3,000	3,050	3,100	3,150	3,200	3,250	3,300	3,350	3,400	3,450	3,500	3,550	3,600	3,650	3,700	3,750	3,800	3,850	3,900	3,950	4,000	4,050	4,100	4,150	4,200	4,250	4,300	4,350	4,400	4,450	4,500	4,550	4,600	4,650	4,700	4,750	4,800	4,850	4,900	4,950	5,000	5,050	5,100	5,150	5,200	5,250	5,300	5,350	5,400	5,450	5,500	5,550	5,600	5,650	5,700	5,750	5,800	5,850	5,900	5,950	6,000	6,050	6,100	6,150	6,200	6,250	6,300	6,350	6,400	6,450	6,500	6,550	6,600	6,650	6,700	6,750	6,800	6,850	6,900	6,950	7,000	7,050	7,100	7,150	7,200	7,250	7,300	7,350	7,400	7,450	7,500	7,550	7,600	7,650	7,700	7,750	7,800	7,850	7,900	7,950	8,000	8,050	8,100	8,150	8,200	8,250	8,300	8,350	8,400	8,450	8,500	8,550	8,600	8,650	8,700	8,750	8,800	8,850	8,900	8,950	9,000	9,050	9,100	9,150	9,200	9,250	9,300	9,350	9,400	9,450	9,500	9,550	9,600	9,650	9,700	9,750	9,800	9,850	9,900	9,950	10,000

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MONDAY INTERVIEW

Optimist's upward curve

Daniel Tully, chairman of Merrill Lynch, talks to Patrick Harverson

A golf club rests against a table, pictures of his family adorn the walls, but no stock market computer screens clutter the desk of the chairman of America's most powerful financial company.

Mr Daniel Tully, who a week ago took over the helm of Merrill Lynch, the largest securities house in the US, does not fit the popular image of Wall Street's elite.

Instead of the intense, blue-blooded financier that people might expect to run one of the nation's largest investment banks and securities houses, Mr Tully is a big, cheerfully confident Irish New Yorker, the son of a dockside steam-fitter from the borough of Queens.

He leaves his Irish heritage behind him to manage a big company with a large number of staff. "The Irish have a certain empathy, compassion and a willingness to put themselves in the other person's shoes."

He admits that, when he started in the securities business in 1955, he knew nothing about stockbroking. Neither, it seems, did his mother. Laughing at the memory, he says: "When I got the job that day, and went home and told my mother that I had a job with Merrill Lynch, Pierce, Fenner & Beane, she said: 'That's great son. I always knew you would do well in the advertising business.'"

While he might not have done well in advertising, the 61-year-old Mr Tully has thrived in stockbroking. After joining Merrill's accounting department, he worked up through the firm's broking workforce, moving to the New York head office in 1976.

Six years later, Mr Tully was made head of the firm's private client business, and in 1985 he was appointed president and chief operating officer. From 1988, he ran Merrill with his long-time friend and partner, Mr William Schreyer, who was chairman until his retirement two weeks ago.

During Mr Tully and Mr Schreyer's tenure, Merrill has grown from one of several dominant firms on Wall Street, to the dominant force. Today, the firm is pre-eminent in almost every area of the US capital markets - its brokers earn more commissions than any other firm, its investment bankers underwrite the most

corporate stock and bond issues, and its investment managers handle more client assets than any financial institution except Fidelity, the mutual funds group.

Despite the firm's growth, Mr Tully's stint at the top has not been problem-free. In the latter part of the 1980s, Merrill's rapid expansion left it with an average return on equity of only 10.8 per cent, well below the industry average of 15 per cent and in 1989 it made a loss of \$212m (\$142m).

At the time, Mr Tully and Mr Schreyer were criticised for allowing Merrill to get badly out of shape. Critics and analysts argued that the duo were great salesmen, but lacked the modern management skills to guide a giant securities house into the 1990s.

The two responded with a three-year cost-cutting programme, which shrank Merrill's workforce from 50,000 to just over 40,000. Mr Tully patrolled the firm's offices, slapping small red dots on equipment and furniture that he believed was surplus to Merrill's needs.

Today, the red dots have gone but, says Mr Tully, the attention to cost control has not. Merrill employs what its chairman calls the "burden of proof" policy, which regularly asks every unit to justify why it should remain part of Merrill Lynch. Mr Tully says: "The burden of proof is on that organisation to come back to us and sell management on why they are critical and integral to our long-term strategy and success."

While retreating from some businesses, Merrill has been expanding in others - most notably asset management. In common with other big Wall Street firms, Merrill wants to build up its fee-based revenues as an insurance against the volatility of its more cyclical businesses such as trading, broking and underwriting.

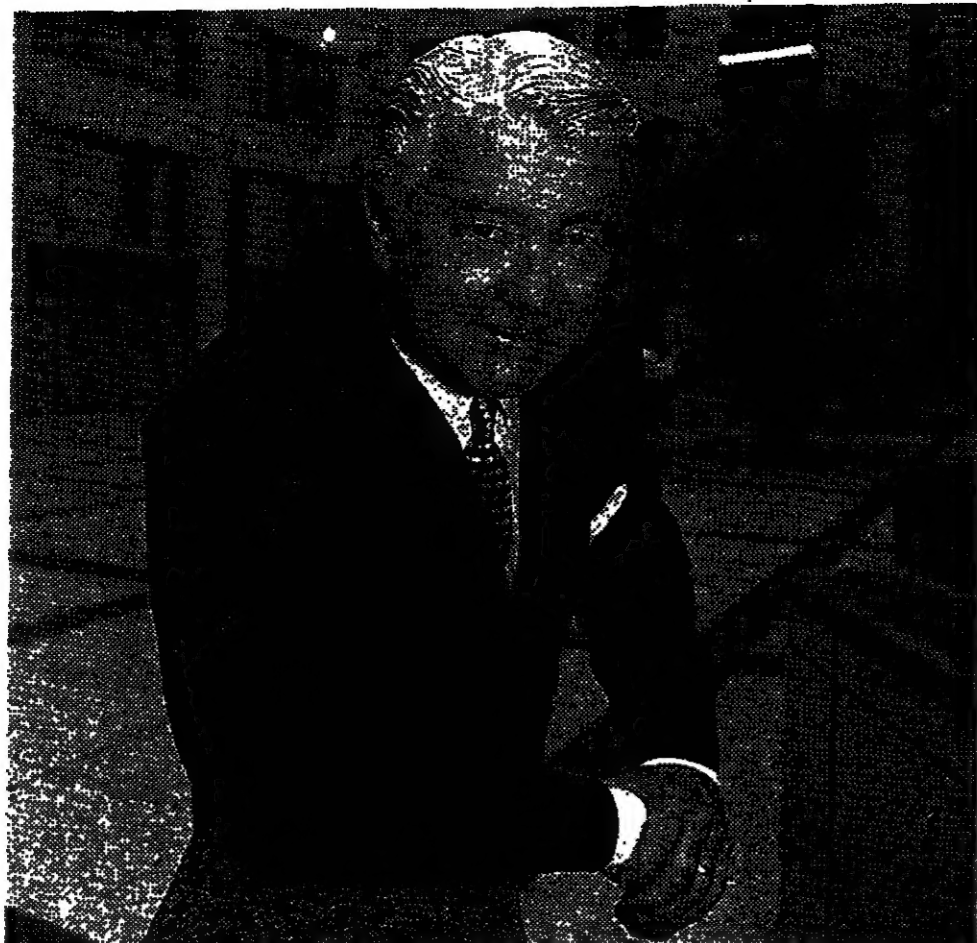
Today, Merrill's recurring revenues cover half of its fixed costs. Mr Tully wants all of the fixed costs covered by the end of the decade. If that target is reached, Merrill's earnings from broking commissions, trading and investment banking would be pure profit.

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'I don't think the future has ever been brighter'

Twenty years later, however, the industry abandoned fixed broking commissions and Merrill, like many Wall Street firms, decided to offer a broader range of services to clients and lock them into long-term relationships.

Consequently, the Merrill of the 1990s is much more than a broker. It is a large financial services supermarket. It offers individual and corporate clients everything from banking-type products such as cash

management that is straightforward, upbeat and reminiscent of another Irish American, former President Ronald Reagan.

Mr Tully says: "I think you could liken my style, absolutely, to a Ronald Reagan; that is, someone who has vision, principles and who will not get mixed down in the details. That does not mean you don't have a great knowledge and understanding of the business, but it's built on mutual respect and trust and the dignity of fellow-individuals. You've got to believe that from the bottom of your mind and heart. I believe it. I trust people."

He trusts his senior managers to get on with managing the firm while he travels, meeting clients and employees. Slipping into one of his many anecdotes, he says: "At a recent conference someone said to me: 'Mr Tully, how can you manage forty-some thousand people, and \$120bn of balance sheet?' I said: 'I don't. It's 11.55am and I haven't spoken to my office yet.' I said: 'Someone is managing 40,000 people, and a lot of people are managing the balance sheet.' Part of my executive responsibility is to set priorities, allocate resources and set the tone and principles which will guide us through the good times and the bad."

He comes down hard, however, on employees that abuse his trust. "If you go outside the parameters," he says, making a slicing motion across his knees with his hand, "I'm not very tolerant."

Otherwise, he seems a tolerant man and, despite his avowed fondness for former President Reagan, broadly supportive of the current Democratic president. "I applaud President Clinton's deficit-reduction goal, but would prefer it if he accomplished more

through spending cuts rather than tax increases." In particular, he is disappointed that there is little in Mr Clinton's economic policy that encourages savings and investment.

Mr Tully is extremely positive about the US, despite the country's economic and social problems. Asked if the American dream has faded, he answers vehemently: "Hell no. I don't think the future has ever been brighter. You look at all the trends in the United States, and you might see a little ripple, but the long-term trends are extremely positive. Every chart I look at starts in the lower left-hand corner and goes to the higher right-hand corner."

Sitting in his spacious office, with its view of the river, and those twin symbols of hope - Ellis Island and the Statue of Liberty - Mr Tully is the embodiment of the American optimist. There is nothing wrong, he says, with being an optimist. After all: "I've never met a rich pessimist."

President Clinton's economic Jeeves

MICHAEL PROWSE
ON AMERICA

It may seem absurd to compare Mr Robert Rubin, the director of the White House National Economic Council, with Bertie Wooster's fictional manservant Jeeves. Yet in a town over-populated with brash, assertive personalities, his self-effacing, low-key demeanour really does bring the amiable Jeeves to mind.

Closely playing up Mr Rubin's deferential style, the Washington Post recently reported his habit of prefacing his rare interjections in White House meetings with the words "in my humble opinion." One can almost imagine him presenting economic options to Mr Clinton on a silver platter: although he knows 10 times as much about finance as the president, he apparently hesitates to indicate a strong preference for one policy over another.

Mr Rubin's apparent lack of ego is seen as especially puzzling given that he has spent his working life on Wall Street. One of the most successful arbitrageurs of his generation, he ended up as a co-chairman of Goldman Sachs, the investment bank. Last year he reported earnings of \$26.5m (\$17.6m), making him unusually wealthy, even by the standards of Mr Clinton's well-heeled Cabinet.

During a 40-minute interview in his panelled office in the west wing of the White House, Mr Rubin struck resolutely to his type-casting. I could not get him to express a really strong opinion about anything, even off the record. When asked for his personal views, he tended to reply by deftly outlining the president's policies on the topic in question.

Yet as director of the NEC, Mr Rubin is potentially the most powerful economic official in Washington. He co-ordinates the activities of all the other economic agencies and enjoys daily access to the president; more than anybody else, he is the prism through which Mr Clinton views the economic world. Yet he rejects flatly any suggestion that he has a specially important role. He is cer-

tainly not Mr Clinton's economic chief of staff, he says, because that would imply the heads of other agencies report to him, which they do not.

Does he accept the common criticism that he is too reluctant to express his own views on policy issues?

"People say that. I really think it's not correct. What you have to do in this job is to perform your co-ordinating function with real intellectual integrity so that everybody feels their views are laid out fully and fairly. Then, separately, you can express your own personal views. I don't thump tables but I don't feel any reticence about coming forward with my views."

Whatever he says, it is hard to believe that Mr Rubin does harbour strong personal views on economic policy. What really seems to excite him is teamwork and the process of brokering agreements. In helping devise the US's new hard-nosed trade policy towards Japan, for example, Mr Rubin got "seven, eight, maybe 10 agencies around the table."

The marathon debate that ensued was apparently unprecedented in that policies towards Japan have usually been fashioned independently in particular agencies, such as the treasury, state or commerce departments.

Yet it was typical of Mr Rubin's mission at the NEC, which is to bring to economic policy-making the kind of coherence and co-ordination that has long characterised foreign and diplomatic policy. The NEC is thus consciously modelled on the National Security Council and Mr Rubin regards his role

as precisely analogous to that of Mr Anthony Lake, the national security adviser.

Mr Rubin's counsel has undoubtedly played an important role in formulating budgetary and trade policy. But quite how far its influence will ultimately stretch remains unclear. During the election campaign, there was speculation that a Clinton administration would move beyond traditional macroeconomic policies and take an active interest in the performance of individual industries, especially in high-tech sectors. Does Mr Rubin personally have faith in "industrial policy"?

I expected - and got - an equivocal response. "Industrial policy is a funny word," he says. "To 100 people it will mean 200 different things - everybody has at least two different definitions in mind." However, he believes there may be "externalities" that could justify a more active government role in some areas. He will not elaborate because he does not want to prejudge the outcome of the few sectoral studies currently under way. Characteristically, all he can promise is that a premium will be placed on inter-departmental co-operation. "There will be Laura [Tyson], Bob Reich, Lloyd Bentsen, Leon Panetta and myself - and others - sitting at the table and working it out together as opposed to something happening in one agency that others don't agree with."

Mr Rubin is urbane, courteous and, above all, non-ideological. His self-effacing style is a breath of fresh air in Washington and has gone down well with more overtly ambitious colleagues. He deserves credit for striving to create a more rational and co-operative policy making apparatus. But whether his committee system, which gives a voice to all interested parties in the federal government, will produce effective policies remains an open question. Unless the NEC's able director provides a stronger sense of direction, some observers worry it will end up producing camels.

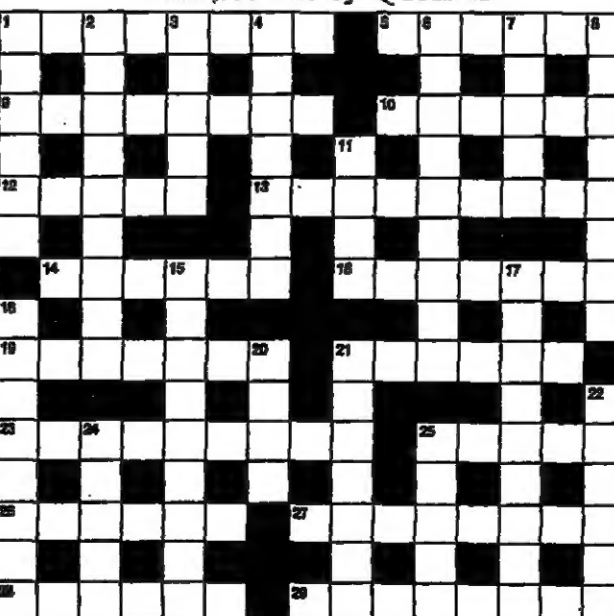
Of broking and jobbing the Pelikan's fond,
See how sweetly he puts your word onto bond.

Pelikan

JOTTER PAD

CROSSWORD

No.8,199 Set by QUARK



- 1 State of mind after bathing? You need to inject enthusiasm (8)
2 Relatively reckless one could get a grilling (6)
3 This possibly usurps one with gloomy disposition (8)
4 Artist comes back into row for list of charges (6)
5 Box one with the clubs, say (6)
6 Trial and goal unsettled this river dweller (9)
7 Small person encountered round new dig (6)
8 US store dealing in Indian (7)
9 The way latex turns in an underhand procedure (7)
10 With reference to name, speak out (8)
11 One likely to see the light? (5)
12 Holder of post that ought to be dealt with (2-4)
13 In favour of benefit the north abandoned (8)
14 King leading a charge in kind of combat (6)
15 Transport centre when reorganised introducing a bit of noise (8)
- 1 Tick in school (6)
2 Extract. Result of dentist's work? (5-4)
3 Absolutely not the first to make suggestion (5)
4 Second of the present month (7)
5 Selling comedy's beginning as riotous as anodyne (9)
6 Included in doubts - 10 heavyweights coming up in HRF (6)
7 Improved cast in the plant (6)
8 It could be in a block lacking excitement (4)
9 Girl left boy with bit of tenacity to flirt (9)
10 Direct X.O puts one out (9)
11 This character is a star in print (8)
12 A hard ball (4)
13 Adversely criticise the detailed analysis (3-4)
14 Sulphide are not quite mixed thoroughly (6)
15 Unmitigated state (5)
16 Person half grays old style train-leader (5)

The solution to last Saturday's prize puzzle will be published with names of winners on Saturday July 24.

No nukes is good nukes

David Gergen and the other news manipulators did a fine job for their political masters at the meeting of the Group of Seven leading industrial nations in Tokyo last week. They got great headlines for the "agreement" on a Gatt deal, for the group's hypocritical words on Bosnia, for the \$3bn (\$2bn) aid package for Russia. Considering that the meeting had gathered amid a general consensus that the G7 was a busted flush, and the seven leaders the most discredited bunch in recent history, this was quite an achievement for the spin merchants.

A by-product of this was that the news managers were able to downplay one of the most serious items on the G7 agenda: the prospect that the world is on the threshold of an ominous, and quite possibly dangerous, proliferation of nuclear weapons. The issue is mentioned in the final communiqué, but in such deadpan terms that it remained safely on the inside pages.

The first and most immediate cause of anxiety is Ukraine, which after long debate now seems determined to hang on to at least some of the 176 strategic nuclear missiles which were part of the Soviet arsenal and happened to be based on Ukrainian territory. This could jeopardise the radical US-Russian nuclear arms reductions treaties signed only six months ago; but it could also give new and dangerous encouragement to other countries to acquire nuclear weapons.

Then there is North Korea, which is probably engaged on building up its own nuclear weapons capability, in defiance

IAN DAVIDSON
OF EUROPE

of its commitment not to do so under the multilateral Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT). This is a particularly disturbing break-out by a hard-line, communist and militaristic country. Last week in Tokyo, Japan made it clear that it would regard a nuclear-armed North Korea as a serious threat to its national security. Japan could probably build nuclear weapons and their delivery systems in very short order, if it decided to go down that road. So if North Korea becomes a nuclear weapons state, we should assume that Japan will, too.

Whether anything can be done to stop North Korea is uncertain. The Americans have been trying diplomatic arm-twisting in bilateral talks, apparently with only modest success; Washington is now talking of international sanctions.

Ukraine has not stated unambiguously its intention to become a nuclear weapons state; but that seems the direction it is heading. President Leonid Kravchuk said last week that the nuclear missiles should be declared "national property" (whatever that means) - until they are

destroyed. Prime Minister Leonid Kuchma went further, and said that Ukraine should formally proclaim itself a nuclear weapons state - until the weapons are removed and destroyed. In the meantime, US intelligence suspects that the Ukrainians are working on the electronic codes which control the missiles, and may be able to crack them in the not-too-distant future.

Ukraine's fundamental objectives remain ambiguous, because the political class is divided. Sometimes it seems they are just using the missiles as bargaining counters, to get more financial aid from the west; such an objective can only have been reinforced by the Tokyo meeting, which offered \$3bn to Russia but nothing to Ukraine. But sometimes it seems they regard the missiles as a security guarantee against possible Russian aggression; and would only give them up in exchange for a security guarantee from the west. If that is the bottom line, Ukraine will keep the missiles, because the west will not give such a guarantee.

In the meantime, Ukrainian foot-dragging is blocking the implementation of the second Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (Start-II) agreed only six months ago by George Bush and Boris Yeltsin. That agreement should reduce the long-range nuclear arsenals of Russia and the US by about two-thirds, from some 11,000-12,000 warheads each to about 3,500 by early next century. But this treaty cannot go into effect, because Ukraine has not ratified the previous Start-I treaty of 1991 on which Start-II is built.

But if nuclear proliferation by Ukraine is a by-product of the disintegration of the Soviet Union, it may be part of a more general pattern. Kazakhstan is another republic with some former Soviet weapons; but whereas Kazakhstan has ratified Start-I, it has not signed the NPT as a non-nuclear weapons state. Iraq's incentive to go nuclear has been intensified by the end of the cold war, since it can no longer rely on Soviet military support against the west. Even North Korea may see the end of the cold war as a reason to build up its national "security".

As a result, the official nuclear powers are urgently trying to rebuild the political credibility of the non-proliferation regime. President Bill Clinton has extended the US moratorium on nuclear testing for another 15 months, and Russia and France have both given their support to a comprehensive test ban. The UK government does not share their enthusiasm, but has enough sense not to object.

The probable collapse of the non-proliferation dyke will have far-reaching consequences. If nuclear weapons are no longer restricted to the very few, those who used to claim to be the only legitimate members of the nuclear club will need new justifications for their political privileges, starting with permanent membership of the UN Security Council. Sooner or later, Germany and Japan must get permanent seats, and it would be better if they did so without acquiring nuclear weapons. Britain and France should make a virtue of necessity, and urge their admission.

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